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An Analysis of some of the Major Roles of Emotion in the Soteriology
of John and Charles Wesley and its Implications in Relationship to
Contemporary Research on Emotions

A Thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

James Arnold Boetcher

Supervised at London School of Theology

May 24, 2018

The emotion of the writers of the New Testament about their experience of the risen Christ is what drives the narrative and elicits a response. Emotion is not the opposite of reason and rationality; it is part of reason's very substance. The idea of communicating the gospel in an emotion-free factual manner is a fallacy.

Matthew Elliott¹

Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan²

I have found that reason alone cannot lead me down the path that I have chosen; emotion is also needed. Or, in the words of the biographer of the fourteenth-century mystic and poet Rumi:

I have come to realize that pure reason is unqualified to penetrate the mystery of God's light, and may, indeed, if too fondly indulged, interpose an impenetrable veil between the heart and God.

A. J. Arberry³

¹ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, p.266.

² Cited by A. Skevington Wood, 1967, *The Burning Heart*, 13, G. Campbell Morgan, "Preaching," 54. However, this quote is not found in either the British or the American edition of Morgan's 1937 book, *Preaching*. Thomas Cook, in his book *Soul-saving Preaching*, undated but published in 1890, does attribute this quote, verbatim, to Morgan: "At a recent Southport Convention, in an address to ministers, Dr. Campbell Morgan laid down the dictum, 'Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit,' and a few years ago the Editor of the British Weekly attributed the lack of pulpit effectiveness to a decay of passion. It is a thankless task to join in the too common wail concerning the character of the modern pulpit, but truth demands the admission that much of our present-day preaching is missing fire, for the very sufficient reason that our souls lack the holy passion which characterized the preaching of the early Methodists."

³ A. J. Arberry, 1979, *Mystical Poems of Rumi 2: Second Selection, Poems 201-400*, "An Autobiographical Sketch by the Late Professor A. J. Arberry," ix.

Abstract

The London School of Theology

James A. Boetcher

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

An Analysis of some of the Major Roles of Emotion in the Soteriology of John and Charles Wesley and its Implications in Relationship to Contemporary Research on Emotions

May 24, 2018

This thesis defends the hypothesis that emotion is at the heart of the soteriology of the Wesley brothers, and thus emotion provides a significant avenue for understanding their theology of salvation.

Although John was not known as an emotional preacher, he certainly was an emotive one, and this emotional component that is embedded within his writings provides the raw material needed for this analysis. His brother, Charles, became the poet of Methodism, and wrote with a true poet's heart, for some of his hymns are still numbered among the mightiest to be found in the panoply of Christian hymnody covering the past five hundred years. Thus, Charles's usual medium of expression, poetry, which is the language of emotion, provides a rich source for extracting some of the various roles of emotion within the Wesleyan corpus. Most importantly, both brothers, with few exceptions, were in full theological agreement, and worked in close cooperation with one another. John specifically endorsed the theological content of Charles's poetry, which poetry was published under their joint names.

What is to be gained by studying the roles of emotion? A wise man once said: "Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit" (frontispiece). In other words, life is lived through emotion, and religion is expressed through emotion; therefore, passion must still be present in today's worship and preaching in order for the Church to thrive and grow.

Chapter one lays the research foundation by considering the history and development of the definitions of certain words that become critical in conducting meaningful research, and these words are discussed at length; parameters are set forth that guide the direction of research. Chapter two contains the literature review, and also includes justification for utilizing a small array of experts who provide technical specialty knowledge, each confined to a separate, specific pursuit that lies within the general fields of neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, and theology.

Chapter three presents the actual research, and a number of significant roles of emotion are suggested. A most interesting discovery is presented under the heading of *Fire in the Pulpit*, where specifics are identified that could make a contribution to a solution for the problem of *passionlessness in the pulpit*. Chapter four is a summary of the results of this research, and the final chapter summarizes important discoveries, suggestions for this writer's original contributions to the field of Wesleyan studies, and possible future research areas.

Dedication

I want to thank, and dedicate this paper to, the Reverend Percy H. P. Gutteridge (1909-1998), who was my pastor, mentor, best friend, confidant, and father-figure for more than thirty years. Without his love and help, I would not be writing this paper. He led me into the exciting life of Wesleyan holiness, and he was the one who ordained me a minister of the Gospel of Christ in 1989.

To sum up Pastor's character in a few words, I remember his favorite lines from Chaucer's *The Parson's Tale*.⁴ I have tried to imitate both Pastor and Chaucer's Parson, and I keep these lines on the wall of my office as a reminder of who I am. Incidentally, of all the characters that Chaucer portrays, the Parson is the only one who is morally mature and pure. Pastor chose the last two lines for his epitaph.

A bettre preest I trowe ^o that nowhere noon ^o ys ^o .	^o know, none, is
He waited after no pompe and reverence,	525
Ne maked him a spiced ^o conscience,	^o excessively scrupulous or sensitive
But Cristes loore^o and his apostles twelve	^o lore or teaching
He taughte; but first he folwed^o it hymself^o.	^o followed, himself

⁴ Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400), 1974, *The Tales Of Canterbury, Complete Geoffrey Chaucer*, Prologue, 18, lines 524-528, as Chaucer wrote it in Middle English. The added translation notes are mine.

Acknowledgments

My deep appreciation and love goes to my wife and best friend, Barbara, for her love, help and support for these past fifty five years (and *especially* the past five), for without her this paper would never have been written.

Laurence Wood, and Steven O'Malley, my supervisors in this project, have been immensely helpful in keeping me on the straight and narrow path to completion. Without them, it would have been impossible for me to write this thesis. They have also become my treasured friends.

I wish to acknowledge the immense debt I owe to so many authors, almost all of whom I have never met in person, and it is in this respect that I most feel what Donne has expressed,

*No man is an island, [but merely] a [small] piece of...[humanity].*⁵

⁵ John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, and severall (sic) steps in my Sicknes (sic)*, first published in 1624. Taken from *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, p. 108, 1959. My alterations are in brackets.

Abbreviations

AV	<i>Holy Bible</i> , Authorized Version, or King James Version of 1611
BCE	<i>The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley</i>
BCP	<i>Book of Common Prayer</i> , Church of England, 1662.
c.	circa
cf.	Consult, compare to, consider
ch.	chapter
Curnock Journal	<i>The Journal of John Wesley</i> , Standard Edition in eight volumes, edited by Nehemiah Curnock, 1909.
CW	Charles Wesley
Intro.	Introduction
JB	James Boetcher
JF	John Fletcher
JW	John Wesley
JWJ	John Wesley's Journal, BCE, Vols. 18-24.
JWW	<i>The Works of John Wesley</i> , Jackson, 3 rd Ed., 1872, reprint of 1979, Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
re.	Concerning or regarding
Tr.	Translator
WHS	Wesley Historical Society

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Table of Contents

Frontispiece	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgments	v
Abbreviations	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Thesis Problem Statement	1
Statement of Purpose	2
Why This Subject Has Been Chosen	4
Relevance of this Study	4
The need to Consider Emotion in Theological Writing	6
Research Approach	9
Research Questions	10
Two Contributors to the Wesleyan Corpus	11
John Fletcher's Contribution	11
Charles Wesley's Contribution	12
Context and Background	15
The <i>Aldersgate Experience</i> - a Definition	16
John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience	19
A Special Analysis of <i>Aldersgate Reconsidered</i>	20
Opinions of an Editor and an Independent Reviewer	27
A Second Error	29
The Etymology of the Word <i>Emotion</i>	29
An Understanding of Emotion	33
John Wesley Ahead Of His Time	34
John Wesley's Second 20 th Century Insight	41
The Consequence of Using Theological Definition	45
An Example of Theological Lexicography	47
Another Example of Theological Lexicography	53
Solutions to this Dilemma	56
Use of the Word <i>Continuum</i>	62
Limitations of this Thesis	63

Anticipated Outcomes	64
Chapter 2: The Literature Review	66
Introduction	66
Contemporary Research on Emotions	66
Neuroscience and Emotion	68
The Authorities Used in this Thesis	69
Luiz Pessoa, Neuroscientist	69
Antonio Damasio (1944-), MD, Neuroscientist	70
Nico H. Frijda (1927-2015), MD, Neuropsychologist	71
Daniel Siegel, Psychiatrist, Neurobiologist	71
Maryanne Wolf, Neuroscientist	72
Francis Mark Mondimore (1953-), Neuropsychiatrist ..	72
Ole Kristian Hallesby (1879-1961), Theologian	72
Hallesby's Contribution To This Thesis	74
A Literature Review	76
Gregory Clapper	76
Richard Steele	77
Matthew Elliott	78
Mark Horst	78
Stephen Voorwinde	79
Benjamin Warfield	79
Emotion Seldom Considered	80
Critical Sources	80
Donald Schön	80
Richard Heitzenrater	81
Chapter 3: Analysis and Interpretation	82
The Wesleys' Aldersgate Experiences	82
A preliminary Conclusion	86
Charles Wesley's Aldersgate Experience	87
A Closer look at Charles's Aldersgate Experience	94
Analysis of Charles Wesley's Aldersgate Experience ...	98
Psalm 107, from the 1662 BCP, Analysis	99
Charles Renders Psalm 107 Into Verse	103
Reframing of Psalm 107 For Today	118

<i>And Can It Be</i> , Analysis	120
<i>O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing</i> , Analysis	123
The Role of Emotion in Charles's Soteriology	128
The Reader's Emotions	129
Emotion as a Candidate for Salvation	130
Role of Two Emotions	130
Emotion in Psalm 107	131
John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience	136
Fire In The Pulpit	143
Emotion and Conscience	146
Pricking The Conscience	147
The Conscience	150
"What does an Aldersgate spirituality do to us?"	154
A Broader Perspective of Emotion	160
The Wesley Brothers' Depressions	162
A Discussion about Depression	162
Depression and the Wesley Brothers	165
Assurance	181
Emotion in Poetry and Music	185
Emotion and Memory	188
Chapter 4 – The Roles of Emotion in Wesley's Theology	192
A Summary	192
Personal Bias and Preference	194
A Candidate for Salvation	194
You must despair before you can hope	195
Emotional Effects of Aldersgate	196
Assurance	197
Gratitude to God	198
John Wesley's Aldersgate experience	199
Fire in the Pulpit	199
Emotion and Conscience	200
Emotion in Poetry and Music	202
Emotion and Memory	202
The Wesley Bouts of Depression	203

Chapter 5: Originality, Contributions, and Further Study	205
So Nobly Describing What God Had Done	205
The Meaning of <i>Simple</i>	206
The Etymology of <i>Emotion</i>	206
Theological Lexicography	207
ἀγάπη and ἀγαπάω	207
A Range of Opinions	208
Pricking the Conscience	208
The Wesley Bouts of Depression	209
The Thesis Goal	209
Further Research	210
Works Cited	211

Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis defends the decisive role of emotion as the means for understanding the soteriology of the Wesley brothers. While building on previous attempts to show the relationship between emotion and soteriology, this thesis expands on previous insights by providing further insights on the role of emotion in their theology of salvation.

Thesis Problem Statement

Beginning with the rise of the Reformation and the dawn of the Enlightenment, the gold standard in theology has become *Reason*. Most Christian theologians, in general, have usually ignored emotion altogether, as evidenced by their silence on this subject, because emotion was thought to be capricious, and therefore, unreliable. Until the beginning of the 1980's, there had been little investigation into the role that emotion plays in theology, and especially in the theology of John Wesley. The limited study that actually has been accomplished on this subject, as will be shown, sometimes involves misunderstanding the eighteenth-century language that Wesley uses. At other times, writers often either misunderstand the emotional terms under study or merely leave these terms undefined. Often, the affective element is merely ignored, as if it does not exist or is not important.

As will be presented in the next chapter, in 1985 Clapper pioneered a study of *John Wesley on Religious Affections*. While his goal is to link Christianity and the affections in order to demonstrate the relational aspect of Wesley's theology,⁶ the goal of this thesis is to determine the role(s) that certain specific emotions play with respect to Wesley's soteriology. In that same year, and in the same spirit, Horst wrote a dissertation intended to establish that Wesley's thinking has an integrity of its own, which forms a coherent unity. The unity, says Horst, that is expressed in

⁶ Gregory Scott Clapper, 1985, *John Wesley on Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and Their Role in the Christian Life and Theology*, Abstract.

Wesley's theology informs one as to what kind of people Christians are with respect to their "emotions and attitudes, experiences and feeling, attitudes and judgments."⁷

These two dissertations are excellent as far as they go, but both fail to notice that, after Wesley's death (1791), the word *emotion* becomes a widely used conflation of all of Wesley's expansive, eighteenth-century conception of passions, appetites, affections, frames and feelings, sentiment and emotion (1820). In Wesley's time, the word *emotion* only means "[a] stirring, motion, [or] vehement trouble of mind."⁸ Later in this chapter, it will be demonstrated that in 1820 the posthumous publication of Thomas Brown's *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind* becomes the catalyst that, over the course of the nineteenth century, produces a generally accepted conflation of all the various emotional terms that Wesley uses, down to just one word - *emotion*. In the process, some of the nuances between Wesley's various terms are lost, and the *theological* roots and religious meanings attached to these terms are also eliminated. This new definition of *emotion*, stripped of religious connotation, readily becomes widely accepted, and by the middle of the twentieth century many professionals no longer even remember that this change has taken place. To better understand Wesley, it is *vital* that one also understands the original nuances that Wesley attaches to these various emotional terms, because in today's perception and language Wesley's spiritual and theological nuances are now eliminated; this paper addresses this need.

From the present day going right back to classical antiquity, there has never been a consensus concerning the meaning of these emotional terms, and it is unlikely that there ever will be agreement. Renowned philosopher Robert Solomon (1993) takes an ancient word, *passion*, and resurrects it with a meaning that is nearly opposite its classical meaning.⁹ While Solomon does acknowledge some of the history of this word, many writers do not, and herein lies part of the problem of translating, say, eighteenth-century ideas into twenty-first-century language.

Statement of Purpose

This thesis explores the roles of emotion in the theology of Wesley in order to understand how the resulting patterns and perceptions might be of benefit to today's

⁷ Mark Lewis Horst, 1985, *Christian Understanding and the Life of Faith in John Wesley's Thought*, Abstract.

⁸ John Wesley, 1777, 'Emotion,' *The Complete English Dictionary, Explaining Most of Those Hard Words, Which are Found in the Best English Writers*, 3rd. Ed.

⁹ Robert C. Solomon, 1993, *The Passions; Emotions and the Meaning of Life*, 70-72.

Christians. An integrated philosophical and theoretical foundation, built upon the principles and discoveries in psychology, neuroscience, and other disciplines, will be used to develop an understanding by which patterns and perceptions of emotion in Wesley's theology can be detected and analyzed. Wesley's raw text will be analyzed and reframed, using textual research methodology coupled with reflective/interpretive inquiry, in order to present Wesley's message of holiness to today's Christians in a way that includes the emotional aspect of his message. Indeed, these are the very same categories of people to whom Wesley ministered, for they include those who are addressed in Charles Wesley's sermon, *Awake, Thou That sleepest*.¹⁰

As will be established in the following chapters, pure reason, unaided by emotion, can never deliver this message. Elliot recognizes this fact when he writes:

The emotion of the writers of the New Testament about their experience of the risen Christ is what drives the narrative and elicits a response. Emotion is not the opposite of reason and rationality; it is part of reason's very substance. The idea of communicating the gospel [or Wesley's theology] in an emotion-free factual manner is a fallacy.¹¹

Indeed, Morgan also understood this fact when he preached that

Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit.¹²

It is the express purpose of this thesis to explore the role of emotion - and to show how *passion* can return to the Wesleyan pulpit in such a way as to arouse an emotive response in the hearer. For, this thesis will attempt to establish that it is the emotion that is aroused in the listener that motivates her/him to reach out to Christ.

The role of emotion in Wesley's writings will be examined through twenty-first century eyes, although Wesley did not understand emotion from this perspective. Theory in every relevant science has been advanced since his time, and therefore it will be necessary to reframe Wesley's ideas in twenty-first century language, understanding and concepts in order to make it applicable for today's people.

However, basic human nature and needs have not changed since his day, and that is the thread that ties Wesley's day with ours. The best example to illustrate this claim is the unchanging human need for Christ, and for the full salvation offered by

¹⁰ Op. cit., Charles Wesley, Sermon 3, BCE, 1:142-158.

¹¹ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, 266. Brackets are mine.

¹² A. Skevington Wood, 1967, *The Burning Heart*, 13, citing G. Campbell Morgan, "Preaching," 54. However, this quote is not found in Morgan's book, *Preaching*. See Frontispiece, fn. 2.

Christ. Wesley's entire message and ministry could be summarized as one that describes what is meant by the term "full salvation." What does change, down through the centuries and millennia, is the language used to express these ideas, and the human understanding of the concepts involved in discussing what Wesley calls *full salvation*.

It is a fact that advancement in the various sciences and humanities has enlarged our vocabulary as well as our general understanding in such areas as psychology, neuroscience, philosophy, and philology. However, development in the understanding of human nature should not be confused with an advancement of human nature, itself.

Why This Subject Has Been Chosen

I have come to realize that pure reason is unqualified to penetrate the mystery of God's light, and may, indeed, if too fondly indulged, interpose an impenetrable veil between the heart and God.

A. J. Arberry

This quotation from Arberry¹³ beautifully supplies the key to this writer's quest not only to understand the Bible, but also to effectively preach it; for, he has found that knowledge alone cannot inspire people to pursue Christ. This thesis represents his attempt to express what is needed in order to motivate others to earnestly seek Christ and to inspire them (and himself) to persevere in this pursuit. This citation also has helped him to better understand the real *goal* of Christ, which is to fully capture, renew, and equip the human heart for eternal service to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ; for this *goal* fully encompasses what the Wesley brothers mean when they use the term *full salvation*. This *goal* captures the great message that John Wesley spent his life, his fortune, and his reputation propagating throughout his parish.

Relevance of this Study

There appears to be a disconnect between the perceived value of emotion in theological studies and what recent studies of the phenomena of emotion reveal. The ancient philosopher Plato viewed emotion as wild and uncontrolled, and something to be subdued so that reason could prevail, and this idea prevailed well into the twentieth-century.¹⁴ The Positivist view reigned from the second half of the

¹³ A. J. Arberry, 1979, *Mystical Poems of Rumi 2: Second Selection, Poems 201-400*, "An Autobiographical Sketch by the Late Professor A. J. Arberry," ix.

¹⁴ Op. cit., *Phaedrus*.

nineteenth- century to perhaps the mid-twentieth-century, whereby emotion was relegated to the position of not merely irrelevance, but a source of error.

Emotion is a human rather than a theological phenomenon, and although Western human emotional character and personality have not changed significantly in the past three hundred years, the descriptive language used with regard to theories of emotion has drastically changed over this time-span. Thus, a more extended introductory review, in this chapter, of the history of the changes in the language used to discuss emotion is certainly warranted. Indeed, if today's textual researcher is unaware of changes in the meaning of language and words that have occurred over the past three hundred years, erroneous conclusions, sometimes even drastically erroneous conclusions, can be reached by merely overlooking the changes wrought by time in the meaning of a single word.

Therefore, the fact that Wesley died over two hundred years ago does not pose an insurmountable problem for the analysis of the role of emotion in his soteriology that is examined in this paper. Indeed, the large volume of pertinent texts left by him and his contemporaries, and particularly their poetical writings, when read with an understanding of the changes that have occurred in the language used in discussing emotion throughout this span of time, can provide the researcher of today access to the living emotional experiences of eighteenth-century personalities, captured through analysis of their written artifacts, with a special emphasis on the poetry of John and Charles Wesley. Through utilization of the results of contemporary research on emotions, the writings of the Wesley brothers are reinvigorated in such a way that present-day researchers can relate to, and thus interpret, said writings by means of emotional bonding between, say, the Wesley brothers and the reader. Emotion is present in the Wesley brothers' theology to the degree that their theology is a living theology. This aliveness, due to its emotional content, is part of what makes their theology attractive and applicable not only in today's milieu but also for future generations.

This access to the emotion contained within Wesley's theology is vital for today's Christian community because the two main issue of concern for John and Charles Wesley - the two grand doctrines of Methodism called Justification and Sanctification – deal with eternal issues of life and death. What makes Wesleyan theology so important is the fact that these men have the ability to express and explain these age-old twin doctrines, and the resulting doctrines that spring from

them, in words of exceptional clarity and power. It is emotion, coupled with reason that adds vital life to their written doctrinal clarity. Christian scholars pursue not only an academic interest in Wesleyan theology, but also pursue the Living and Most High God, Himself, as is evidenced, experienced, and felt through, for instance, the emotional content of Wesleyan theology and soteriology.

The need to Consider Emotion in Theological Writing

Elliott has noted that theologians, preachers, and scholars in general have traditionally eschewed making reference to emotions in theological studies because they felt that emotions were irrational, negative and/or unreliable.¹⁵ One of the prime reasons for this attitude is because these theologians hold a non-cognitive view of emotion.¹⁶ Proof of neglecting emotion can be had by noting its sparseness or absence in the works of many theological writers, or in their stress of emphasizing reason. The exceptions to this trend make this general absence even more noticeable.

One notable early twentieth-century exception is Warfield, who wrote:

Now the text tells us of this God — of *this* God, remember, — that He loves. In itself, before we proceed a step further, this is a marvellous [sic] declaration... **A God without emotional life would be a God without all that lends its highest dignity to personal spirit whose very being is movement; and that is as much as to say no God at all.** And more than enough for us that our text assures us that God loves, nay, that He is Love. What it concerns us now to note, however, is not the mere fact that He loves, but what it is that He is declared to love. For therein lies the climax of the great proclamation. This is nothing other than “the world.” For this is the unimaginable declaration of the text: ‘God so loved the world.’ It is just in this that lies the mystery of the greatness of His love.¹⁷

Warfield says here that to remove emotion from the nature of God is to destroy the very concept of God. Thus, he argues, if humanity were made in God’s image, then emotion is a vital part of that image. Consideration of emotion abounds in the works of Warfield. He even dedicates one entire sermon, which he preached in the Princeton Seminary chapel, to the subject of emotion in the life of Jesus.¹⁸

Warfield’s strong emotional context here not only makes his words alive and

¹⁵ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful Feelings*, p. 13, 257. I. Howard Marshall, in *Faithful Feelings*, back cover. Rosalía Baena, 2013, *The Epistemology of Difference: Narrative Emotions in Personal Stories of Disability*, in “The Emotions and Cultural Analysis,” Ana Marie, González, Ed., p. 100.

¹⁶ E.g., Elliott, 2006, *Faithful feelings*, p.100; Michael P. Morrissey, 1989, *Reason and Emotion: Modern and Classical Views on Religious Knowing*, in “Horizons,” 16/2, 275-291, p. 275.

¹⁷ Benjamin B. Warfield, 1913, Sermon 4, *God’s Immeasurable Love*, in *The Saviour of the World: Sermons Preached in the Chapel of Princeton Theological Seminary*, p. 117. Italics are Warfield’s, bold is mine.

¹⁸ Benj. B. Warfield, 1912, *On the Emotional Life of Our Lord*, in “Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary,” pp. 35-90.

personal, but also provides an excellent summary of why emotion is a relevant, and vital, part of any theological study, and why the subject of this thesis is important.

Another exception is the eighteenth-century revivalist, President¹⁹ Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), who wrote *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*,²⁰ wherein he deals with the importance of the emotional aspect of humanity with regard to God. Edwards was not a loud, flamboyant preacher, but his sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*,²¹ is a bold demonstration of preaching made powerful through the use of rhetoric designed to elicit an emotive response in the listener in order to bring “sinners,” in Edwards’s words, to God.²² In other words, Edwards was not known as an emotional, but rather an emotive preacher.

Helen Keller (1880-1968) makes a very remarkable, and perspicacious, observation about the importance of emotion. As she was nearing her eleventh birthday, she wrote a letter to the Reverend Phillips Brooks, dated South Boston, June 8, 1891, in fulfilling a promise to send to him her picture. Here is part of the opening paragraph:

I send you my picture as I promised, and I hope when you look at it this summer your thoughts will fly southward to your happy little friend. I used to wish that I could see pictures with my hands as I do statues, but now I do not often think about it because my dear Father has filled my mind with beautiful pictures, even of things I cannot see. If the light were not in your eyes,²³ dear Mr. Brooks, you would understand better how happy your little Helen was when her teacher explained to her that the best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen nor even touched, but just felt in the heart.²⁴

Little blind Helen had learned well from her teacher and she exquisitely captures the importance of considering the heart, the emotional element... even, or rather especially, in the field of theology. Sometimes, too much light - reason - can obscure the beautiful, because, says Helen, beauty can, really, only be “seen,” in her words, and thus appreciated, through one’s emotions. Indeed, when this writer was first drawn to Wesley nearly fifty years ago, although he did not understand it then,

¹⁹ Edwards was President of the College of New Jersey, a precursor of Princeton University; see Marsden, 2003, *Jonathan Edwards, A Life*.

²⁰ Op. cit., 1746.

²¹ Op. cit., 1741.

²² Harry S. Stout, ed., *Intro. to Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, by Jonathan Edwards [1739], in “Sermons and Discourses, 1739-1742,” “Works of Jonathan Edwards,” Yale University Online, Vol. 22, p. 401.

²³ Helen is saying that Mr. Brooks has the gift of vision, but I think it not amiss to liken “light” to reason.

²⁴ Helen Keller (1880-1968), 1904, *The Story of My Life*, p. 203. This concept is, indeed, a great truth.

it was because he saw that the emotional content in Wesley's writings imparted a quality of life, a type of beauty, to Wesley's written words. In asking the question of what is the role of emotion in the works of Wesley, this author is trying to elicit, and to share, this living, emotional aspect that is encased, but hopefully not entombed, within Wesley's corpus.

Many psychiatrists and psychologists generally agree that life is lived, heightened, or experienced through one's emotional faculties, and that this continual emotional experience is what gives life its zest and meaning. Psychologist William James speaks of a "central principle," which he says some call "the soul" and others "a fiction." He writes, "This central part of the Self is *felt*; just as the body is felt, the feeling of which is also an abstraction" and that "this palpitating inward life is, in me, that central nucleus." James's "palpitating life" is a reference to one's emotional nature.²⁵ In the next chapter an in-depth discussion concerning the meaning of *felt*, *feel*, and *feeling* versus the word *emotion* will be presented using research provided by a well-known neuroscientist that will provide a clear and unambiguous understanding of what the Wesley brothers' mean when they use these words.

Psychiatrist Karen Horney writes, in referring to James and a healthy emotional life, "that the most alive center of ourselves" is our feelings,²⁶ and that "feelings are the most alive part of ourselves,"²⁷ These statements are clearly references to the importance of one's emotions. Horney is stating, as an expert, what is intuitively obvious. By reframing and extending Horney's statement that "feelings are the most alive part of ourselves," two things can be illustrated.

We live, that is, experience and express, life through *our* emotions. Without emotion, *our* lives would be flat, dead, and unexpressive.

In the same way, *we live*, experience and express, *our* religion through *our* emotions.²⁸

²⁵ William James, 1890, *The Principles of Psychology*, 1:298-299. James thought that "all [this central part] can ever feel distinctly is some bodily process," p. 300. He defines the *Self* as "the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account," p. 291. Italics in text and footnote are James's.

²⁶ Karen Horney, 1950, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, p. 157. Definitions for feelings and emotion will be presented in chapter three.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

²⁸ James Boetcher, formatted, as indicated, for emphasis, and written during a time of personal reflection.

First, these lines capture what James, Horney, and others mean when they say that “the most alive center of ourselves” is our emotions, and this statement also reframes the theme of this thesis, which is focused on the role of emotion in Wesley’s soteriology, and in the process highlights the importance and necessity of studying the role of emotion in theology. To experience anything, say, Wesley’s Aldersgate experience, for instance, is to *feel* it emotionally, and this is why these psychiatrists say that we are alive, that is, we live, through our emotions.

While we experience an event through our emotions, it is our reason that brings order to, or arranges that event into a structured whole. For those who are religious, the importance and ramifications of being able to *live* and *express* their religion can hardly be overstated. But, it must be remembered that this emphasis on emotion in no way relegates reason to a lesser position. Rather, human beings are endowed with both affective and cognitive faculties, and both must, or at least should, work together as will be demonstrated in this thesis.

Second, this statement, above, provides an avenue in which to define the scope of the words *we* and *our*, when they are used in this thesis. These words are context dependent and include either the whole human race or an entire subgroup thereof, such as all Christians, or all Muslims, or all religious people. Here, the first reference is to the entire human race, the second to all religious people.

Research Approach

This section presents various aspects of the methodology utilized in this thesis. Textual research methodology with reflective/interpretive inquiry is employed to explore and analyze the role of emotion in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley. Heitzenrater succinctly states the relationship and the importance between historical (and also textual) research and reflection, and his statement is equally applicable for textual research:

Discovery and reflection together...are the lifeblood of the historian. Discovery is the first task of the historical researcher... reflection is the first task of the historical interpreter.”²⁹
Without discovery, reflection has no factual basis upon which to proceed; without reflection, discovery has no significance or importance for the present.³⁰

Thus, part of the legitimacy of this approach is the use of, where possible, the recently published *critical editions* of the artifacts left by Wesley and his contemporaries, coupled with systematic reflection by the researcher. Critical

²⁹ Richard Heitzenrater, 1989, *Mirror and Memory*, Nashville: Kingswood, 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Rear cover.

sources include *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* (1976-present; 20 of 35 volumes available), *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, A. M.* (2007/8; 2 volumes, Kimbrough and Newport), *Susanna Wesley, the Complete Writings* (1997, Wallace), *The Letters of Charles Wesley, a Critical Edition, with Introduction and Notes* (2013, 1 volume of 2 available, Newport and Lloyd), *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley, a Reader* (2011, Kimbrough), *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley, a Reader Expanded Edition* (2013, Kimbrough), *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* (1988/90/92, 3 volumes, Kimbrough and Beckerlegge), *Unexamined Labours* (2008, Forsaith and Loyer), *Reluctant Saint? A Theological Biography of Fletcher of Madeley* (2001, Streiff). Many other works have been drawn upon which are not considered to be critical works, such as the voluminous work of Thomas Jackson, and the plethora of Wesleyan material published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Textual research methodology, as utilized in this thesis, is concerned about: the sources used for this research, especially the critical resources; the *etymology* of the word *emotion*, which becomes important when attempting to analyze eighteenth-century emotional terms because the history behind the derivation of word origins and changes in word meaning that can naturally occur across the centuries, can drastically affect, for better or for worse, any results produced by analysis; and, the history behind relevant contemporary works having a different viewpoint than that of this author. Thus, delving into the *etymology* of the meaning of the word *emotion* becomes critically important; and, investigating the background of the emotion some call love becomes vital to meaningful analysis.

The second half of this chapter deals extensively with these textual questions, above, because it is not enough to simply disagree with another viewpoint: one must logically defend one's differing position. For the record, this author holds all of those fine people, with whom he may disagree, in the highest personal regard and considers each of them as a friend. While the histories presented later in this chapter may seem to be somewhat tedious, they are nevertheless vital to the integrity of this thesis.

Research Questions

The basic question of this thesis is: what is the role of emotion in the theology of Wesley? In asking this question one naturally understands that actually, many roles

are probable, and so, by extension, one asks what each of these many roles might be. But, these non-directional research questions begin after the obvious is asked.

First, how is emotion perceived in Wesley's theology? This is a descriptive question that examines what is happening in either actual or potentially observable events and/or conduct, actions or deeds.

The second and third questions are interpretive: What are the conditions for the people involved in this unit of text? What is/are the meaning(s) of this/these event(s), conduct, action(s) or deed(s)?

The fourth and fifth questions are theoretical: What is the significance of certain events, conducts, actions or deeds that happen? How can this/these event(s), conduct(s), action(s) or deed(s) be explained?

Two Contributors to the Wesleyan Corpus

John Fletcher's contribution

Wood mentions that, in 1771, when Fletcher published the *First Part of an Equal Check to Antinomianism*, Fletcher was "immediately recognized as Wesley's authoritative interpreter," and *vindicator*.³¹ Wood also claims that Fletcher's part in this triumvirate is to bring consistency to John Wesley's writings by "reshaping them into a larger synthesis," and for this reason Wood names Fletcher as Wesley's theologian in a manner similar to that of Melancthon's relationship to Luther. Wood observes that virtually everything written by Fletcher was approved by John and/or Charles,³² meaning that the brothers were in agreement with him, and therefore Fletcher's writings could be considered as an extension of their own writings; similarly, their writings could be considered as an extension of Fletcher's writings.³³ It is doubtful whether any scholar today could definitively sort out, precisely, what each member of this triumvirate contributed to the overall Wesleyan corpus.

³¹ Laurence Wood, 2002, *The Meaning Of Pentecost In Early Methodism*, 75. The original document to which Wood refers is titled, 1771, *A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Minutes: Occasioned by A Circular, Printed Letter, Inviting Principal Persons, Both Clergy and Laity, as well of the Dissenters as of the Established Church, Who Disapprove of these Minutes, To Oppose Them in a Body, as a Dreadful Heresy: and Designed To Remove Prejudice, Check Rashness, Promote Forbearance, Defend the Character of an eminent Minister of Christ, and Prevent Some Important Scriptural Truths From Being Hastily Branded as Heretical. In Five Letters, To the Hon. And Rev. Author of the Circular Letter*, Bristol: W. Pine.

³² Laurence Wood, 2002, *The Meaning Of Pentecost In Early Methodism*, 77-78.

³³ Ibid.

In 1761, in a letter no longer extant, John Wesley had asked Fletcher to enter into fulltime service with him and Wesley included this caveat: “Come, then, and if you do not wish to be an equal partner with me, I will be ready to serve under you.”³⁴ In 1773, John Wesley writes a heartfelt letter to Fletcher beseeching him to relieve him as the leader of the Methodist movement due to his own ill health.³⁵ In this same year Charles writes to Fletcher, expressing the hope that “J. F. will succeed J. W.”³⁶ If Fletcher would accept his “momentous proposal,” Wesley said he would become Fletcher’s assistant.³⁷

Therefore, it is reasonable to include Fletcher in this paper, if for no other reason, as a generally unseen participant in the creation of the Wesley corpus because Fletcher and the Wesley brothers are in full agreement, and, as Wesley’s authoritative interpreter, Fletcher certainly must have helped Wesley in facilitating the creation of Wesley’s corpus through the additional clarity his assistance provided to both brothers. It is reasonable to acknowledge, by means of including Fletcher’s name in this paper, Fletcher’s significant contribution to John’s and Charles’s writings even though he may not be often cited herein.

Charles Wesley’s Contribution

The fact that only the Wesley brothers’ extant writings are now available raises the issue of the loss of considerable information, because visual cues, which are primarily emotional, comprise as much as sixty five percent of the information conveyed during direct speech.³⁸ Wesley’s final sermon at Oxford provides a good example of this solution if one reflects upon the reactive comments of Benjamin Kennicott and William Blackstone.³⁹

This loss of emotional content, due to the fact that only the written works of John Wesley are now available today, can be somewhat compensated for by including the writings of his brother, Charles Wesley, in the Wesley corpus because of John’s

³⁴ Patrick Streiff, 2001, *Reluctant Saint? A Theological Biography of Fletcher of Madeley*, London: Epworth, 133. Streiff says that this revealing information was included in a letter from JF to CW, written 19 August 1761.

³⁵ See Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Founder of the Methodists*, NY: Harper & Brothers, 2:147-148, for Wesley’s letter of request to Fletcher, and Fletcher’s reply.

³⁶ Patrick Streiff, 2001, *Reluctant Saint?*, 217.

³⁷ The quotation is Tyerman’s evaluation of Wesley’s letter. Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Founder of the Methodists*, 2:147-148.

³⁸ Sherwyn P. Morreale, Brian H. Spitzberg, and J. Kevin Barge, 2007, *Human Communication, Motivation, Knowledge, and Skills*, Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 110-111.

³⁹ Albert Outler, *Intro. Comments, The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976–), 1:113, 114.

close association, and general agreement, with his brother Charles; for, with few exceptions, the brothers were generally in full theological agreement. Even though their conversion experiences were not identical, it will be establish that a common pattern can be identified in these experiences, and that analysis of each conversion will yield similar results.

Although Charles wrote the bulk of the vast number of the hymns written by the Wesley brothers, it is common knowledge, according to Bett, “that there are many hymns written by the Wesleys of which it has been impossible to say whether they were the work of John or Charles.”⁴⁰ In studying the Eucharistic hymns of the Wesley brothers,⁴¹ Rattenbury, in attempting to sort out the authorship of the hymn “on Ordinance Divine,” considers Bett’s “prosodic rules” but the only conclusion he is able to reach is that “the sentiment [expressed in this hymn] is that of both brothers.”⁴²

The few exceptions to Bett’s statement concerning authorship include Charles Wesley’s 1749 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, which was published by him entirely as his own work,⁴³ and the hymnal John Wesley anonymously published during the brothers’ American sojourn in Georgia, in 1737, entitled *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns*,⁴⁴ which was the work of John Wesley acting mostly as a translator and editor.⁴⁵ Although the 1737 hymnal has sometimes been attributed to both brothers, this book was written, says Baker, before Charles had “found his creative muse” in 1738.⁴⁶

Therefore, all materials written by John and Charles Wesley are considered, because their beliefs really are, for the most part, the same. The educator and

⁴⁰ Henry Bett, 1945, *The Hymns of Methodism*, 3rd ed., London: Epworth, 21.

⁴¹ The Wesley hymns that Rattenbury uses are from the 1st ed., John and Charles Wesley, 1745, *Hymns on the Lord’s Supper*, Bristol: Felix Farley; and, George Osborn, 1869, *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, 13 Vols., London: Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office. J. Ernest Rattenbury, 1945, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, unnumbered page before *Preface*.

⁴² J. Ernest Rattenbury, 1945, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, 41. Bett devotes an entire chapter to the question of authorship: ‘John Wesley or Charles Wesley?’, *The Hymns of Methodism*, 21-33.

⁴³ Charles Wesley, 1749, *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 2 vols., Bristol: Felix Farley.

⁴⁴ John Wesley, 1737, *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, Charles-Town [Charleston]: Timothy.

⁴⁵ Henry Bett, 1945, *The Hymns of Methodism*, 3rd ed., 13-20. Bett says that John Wesley translated a number of hymns written by German Pietists, and borrowed much of the rest of the hymns in his 1737 hymnal from other sources.

⁴⁶ Frank Baker and George Walton Williams, eds., 1964, *John Wesley’s First Hymn-book*, London: The Wesley Historical Society, xvii. Charles’s “creative muse” blossomed immediately after his Aldersgate experience.

Methodist minister, William Larrabee,⁴⁷ best summarizes the reasons why this thesis refers to the writings of John and Charles Wesley, and John Fletcher as the Wesley corpus. He writes:

The great triumvirate of Arminian Methodism seems each one peculiarly adapted to the work which Providence assigned him to do - John Wesley to travel and superintend the societies, Charles Wesley to make the hymns, and John Fletcher to perfect the doctrines. Each did well his part. Each deserves, perhaps equally, a "place in the memory" of the great Methodist family.⁴⁸

The above paragraph speaks of a triumvirate of which this writer is unwilling to disturb, for the simple reason that each member thereof has made a seamless contribution to the whole of what is commonly known, at least in this thesis, as the *Wesleyan corpus*.

Charles, in particular, provides a significant amount of rich, and valuable, emotional content that would otherwise be lost, through his voluminous poetical material that is expressed not only as poetry intended to be read, but also in the poetry of his many hymns. Therefore, based upon the logic presented in this section, it would be a mistake to merely measure the quantity of Charles's, or John's, writings as an indication of their relative importance in this thesis, for "the sentiment [expressed in these hymns, particularly,] is that of both brothers."⁴⁹

In a letter⁵⁰ to Louis Untermeyer, dated January 1, 1916, the eminent and highly acclaimed American Poet, Robert Frost (1874-1963), presents an interesting argument that poetry should begin with an emotion and culminate in a poem.⁵¹

I read [your poem, *Swimmers*] and liked it because it says something, first felt and then unfolded in thought as the poem wrote itself. That's what makes a poem. A poem is never a put up job so to speak. It begins as a lump in the throat a sense of wrong, a homesickness a lovesickness. It is never a thought to begin with. It is at its best when it is a tantalizing vagueness. It finds its thought and succeeds, or doesn't (sic.) find it and comes to nothing. It finds its thought or makes its thought. I suppose it finds it lying around with others not so much to its purpose in a more or less full mind. That's why it oftener comes to nothing in youth before experience has filled the mind with thoughts. It may be a big big emotion then

⁴⁷ James G. Wilson (1832-1914), 1889, *Appletons' cyclopædia of American Biography*, NY: D. Appleton, 3:620-621.

⁴⁸ William Clark Larrabee (1802-1859), 1853, *Wesley and his Coadjutors*, Cincinnati: Swormstedt & Poe, 2:259.

⁴⁹ J. Ernest Rattenbury, 1945, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, 41. Bett devotes an entire chapter to the question of authorship: 'John Wesley or Charles Wesley?', *The Hymns of Methodism*, 21-33.

⁵⁰ Robert Frost (1874-1963), 2014, *The Letters Of Robert Frost, Vol. 1, 1886-1920*, Faggen, R., Richardson, M., & Sheehy, D. G., eds., 410-411.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 410-411.

and yet find nothing it can embody in. It finds the thought and the thought finds the words. Let's say again: A poem positively must not begin thought first.³³⁸

In footnote 338, the editors again quote Frost:

³³⁸ See also *Some Definitions* by Robert Frost : "A poem begins with a lump in the throat; a home- sickness or a love- sickness. It is a reaching- out toward expression; an effort to find fulfilment. A complete poem is one where an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found the words"

Frost is saying that poetry should first begin with an emotional *experience*, which, when experienced by a mature and skilled poet, then generates thought in the mind of that poet, which finally culminates in a written expression of that emotion. Furthermore, says Frost, this process, once begun, produces a poem that may seem to write itself; the poem seems to flow quickly onto paper. As will be demonstrated, many of Charles's poems were each written in a short span of time, including the great hymns *And Can it Be*, and *O For a Thousand Tongues*; and were written during times when Charles was experiencing great emotion. This description provided by Frost can be seen to apply to much of what Charles wrote, and also to John, and can provide an additional avenue for examining emotion, and the role of that emotion, within the Wesley corpus.

Thus, it can be seen that Charles's poetry becomes especially significant if one wishes to understand John Wesley's writings or his *Aldersgate experience*. Also, Charles's non-poetic writings become important because they can provide concrete illustrations of the emotions that are expressed within his poetry.

Context and Background

Perhaps the most notable area of emotional content in the Wesleyan corpus is that which is enclosed within the poetry/hymns of the Wesley brothers, because more people on both sides of the Atlantic were genuinely touched, emotionally as well as cognitively, by the Wesley brothers' hymns than by their oral or prose works, for even the illiterate sang these hymns. However, Rattenbury makes the claim that in order to "properly" understand these hymns, they "must be read in their eighteenth-century context, and not in that of the twentieth" or twenty-first century context.⁵² This requirement is extended to include any part of Wesley's theology, thus making

⁵² John Ernest Rattenbury, 1996, *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*, 2nd American Ed., 1.

the examination of eighteenth-century writers by one living in the twentieth, or twenty-first, century, a truly cross-cultural task.

In considering the context and background of the role of emotion in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley, the passage of time, the natural evolution of language, and several other issues have proven to be particularly troublesome in theological studies, as will be demonstrated, below. The purpose of this chapter includes delineating some of these problems in order to properly set the stage for a rigorous, logical discussion of the theological context which informs the position to be argued in this thesis. The issues presented are vital and must not, and indeed cannot, be ignored if a right understanding of Wesley is to be achieved. The fact that a number of the writers cited in the next section have deservedly earned recognized status as first-class Wesleyan scholars, and have, nevertheless, misunderstood some of the language used by Wesley, underscores the need to address these issues.

The Aldersgate Experience - a Definition

Bishop Lewis, in his essay, *Aldersgate the Motive Power of the Church*, makes this blunt, but profound, statement: “Aldersgate is a demonstration of the central place of emotion in religion;”⁵³ a statement that provides an excellent commencement point for this thesis. Indeed, along with a correct understanding of Wesley’s culture and eighteenth-century language usage, an adequate comprehension of what happened to John Wesley at Aldersgate Street is also an important part of the background needed in order to understand “the central place of emotion in religion.”

However, considerable confusion, concerning what both John and Charles experienced in May of 1738, has been generated by the use of multiple, and generally undefined, terms used as either metaphors or descriptors intended to *identify* what occurred at Aldersgate. Just as Wood proves that John Wesley uses nearly fifty different, but synonymous, phrases to describe perfection,⁵⁴ so some in subsequent generations of Methodists have generated numerous, synonymous, phrases that have become metaphors for the Wesley brothers experiences occurring on May twenty-first, and twenty-fourth, of 1738; metaphoric phrases such as *Conversion, Aldersgate experience, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost experience and Pentecostal experience*, with the caveat that the word Pentecost[al]

⁵³ Edwin Lewis, 1938, in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 80-81.

⁵⁴ Laurence Wood, 2002, *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism*, 121 ff.

is not referenced to the later Pentecostal churches that sprang out of Methodism during the nineteenth-century but to the Pentecost promised through the Evangelists.⁵⁵ The Wesley brothers focus on the Giver, but later Pentecostal churches have shifted their focus to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a significant difference, indeed.

This author is not, by any means, the originator of, or the first to use, the metaphoric phrase *Aldersgate experience* as a short-hand notation referring to what each of the brothers experienced on the aforementioned dates of 1738. In Clark's 1938 book commemorating the two-hundredth anniversary of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience, entitled, *What Happened at Aldersgate*, this term is used thirty times by several contributing essayists. Maddox, editor of the 1990 book, *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, uses the main part of this metaphor in his book's title as a short-hand notation referring to John Wesley's experience that occurred when he happened to be visiting a meeting house, in 1738, whose location happened to be on Aldersgate Street. In fact, several of the contributors to Maddox's book, *Aldersgate Reconsidered* (1990), use the phrase *Aldersgate experience*, or *Aldersgate experiences*, for a cumulative total of twenty-four times; Richard Heitzenrater utilizes this short-hand notation twice, and Theodore Runyon once, in this same book.

The writers' descriptions, below, represent only a small sample of those employing this metaphor, but they articulate a number of interesting phrases concerning the usage of this metaphor; phrases that, when examined cumulatively, provide a clear understanding of the meaning of the term *Aldersgate experience*; phrases such as:

Subsequent Aldersgate experience.⁵⁶

Eight days after the Aldersgate experience.⁵⁷

Those who would explain away the Aldersgate experience.⁵⁸

A Methodist who was at those conferences is still more thrilled when he realizes that in the Aldersgate experience of John Wesley and in the social program which Mr.

⁵⁵ Matthew 3:11 ff.; Mark 1:4 ff.; Luke 3:16 ff.; and John 1:26-27.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 'What Happened At Aldersgate', 33.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 34.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 39.

Wesley inaugurated at the Foundery, he has the very heart of the individual gospel and of the social gospel.⁵⁹

Now is it not evident, judging from *our* fruitlessness, that we of today need an Aldersgate experience just as much as Wesley did?⁶⁰

Habits of holiness plus an Aldersgate experience of Christ will build the Church of God anywhere.⁶¹

Call the Aldersgate experience what you will, 'the witness of the Spirit,' a 'second blessing,' a 'personal Pentecost,' yet it was only a beginning.⁶²

These are they which are implicit in the Aldersgate experience.⁶³

Ours is the Great Evangel, come down to earth from Heaven. It is the very heart and soul of the Aldersgate experience, and this is what Methodism is supposed to know best of all.⁶⁴

The test of the legitimacy of Methodism for this time beyond all doubt lies in the validity of the Aldersgate experience for all time.⁶⁵

He was happy, for thousands of young people still loved him because he had had the Aldersgate experience and was Christian spirited.⁶⁶

Oh, that we might have that phase of Aldersgate experience! Have Christ on the face of the earth!⁶⁷

My subject is phrased 'Our Personal Approach to Aldersgate.' The word 'our' makes it intensely personal. I am not much concerned about the historical aspects of Mr. Wesley's Aldersgate experience, but I am intensely interested in bringing it down from the past, out of the theories that men have woven about it, and placing it in the present living days.⁶⁸

Not because it is old or new, but because it is true is the Aldersgate experience important.⁶⁹

This sampling from a number of authors adequately defines the range of meaning for the metaphor *Aldersgate experience* as first, a metaphoric reference specifically to John Wesley's experience of May 24th, 1738, and second, a reference to anyone else who has had, or wants to have, a similar experience to that which each Wesley

⁵⁹ Ivan Lee Holt, 'Aldersgate the Motive Power of the Church,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 59.

⁶⁰ Ralph S. Cushman, 'The Meaning of Aldersgate,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 94.

⁶¹ Ibid., 96.

⁶² Ibid., 101. Quotation marks are Cushman's.

⁶³ James H. Straughn, 'Aldersgate the Basis of Methodist Doctrine,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 133.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 140.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Harvey W. Cox, 'Aldersgate and Christian Stewardship,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 178.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 181.

⁶⁸ U. V. W. Darlington, 'Our Personal Approach to Aldersgate,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 222. I share Darlington's passion to "bring it down from the past."

⁶⁹ Lynn Harold Hough, 'Methodism's Recall to Aldersgate,' in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 237.

brother so strikingly describes in their respective journals; *not an identical experience*, but a *similar experience*, customized by God, to meet the individual needs of the seeker; in other words, this metaphoric short-hand phrase also refers to one's own personal Pentecost as promised by the Evangelists.

With the definition of this metaphor now established one can now also refer to Charles's *Aldersgate experience*, which experience was similar, but not identical, to John's. It is suggested that the use of the metaphoric term *Aldersgate experience* can provide a useful, simplified, and already-well-established shorthand notation if one understands that *experience* is the referent rather than the actual location at Aldersgate Street. This metaphor is extensively used to refer to specifically John Wesley's Aldersgate experience by various essayists in Maddox's 1990 book, *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, as will be shown immediately below.

The main analysis of the Wesleys' *Aldersgate experiences* will be accomplished in chapter three, where it will be contended that an Aldersgate experience is both a significant and specific emotional *event*, and also *a* (not *the*) climax point in Wesley's *process* of sanctification.⁷⁰ In other words, an Aldersgate experience is only part of the overall *process of sanctification*. John Wesley's life experiences leading up to his Aldersgate event, and all of his subsequent experiences, are just as important, and vital, as the *event* of an Aldersgate experience, itself; an Aldersgate experience is but one point upon the life-long process of sanctification. Outler makes a similar observation concerning Wesley's pre-Aldersgate experiences and learning when he asks a pointed rhetorical question: "Did Wesley learn all this [his theology] after Aldersgate?"⁷¹ In answering no, Outler emphasizes the just importance of properly recognizing Wesley's pre-Aldersgate contributions to his *Aldersgate experience*.

John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience

In analyzing any of the roles of emotion in Wesley's writings, John's Aldersgate experience is, for reasons to be presented in chapter three, a major, positive, and affective experience that not only influences the remainder of Wesley's life and theology, but also positively affects Wesleyan churches even today, although not everyone would agree with this statement. This section presents, below, an original

⁷⁰ This position is also advocated by Laurence Wood, throughout his monumental 2002 book, *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism*.

⁷¹ Albert C. Outler, 1980, 'The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition,' in *The Place of Wesley in the Christian Tradition*, Kenneth E. Rowe, ed. Underline is Outler's.

analysis of a major theme in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*,⁷² a theme reached, or supported by, several deservedly highly respected Wesleyan scholars, who reach the conclusion that Wesley's Aldersgate experience contributes negative, indeed, perhaps even destructive, results to today's Church. If their conclusion is true, then this thesis loses its vitality and validity.

Therefore, a rebuttal of their conclusion is not only called for, but demanded, if the integrity of this thesis is to be maintained. This rebuttal is vital for two reasons: first, this misunderstanding of what happened at Aldersgate is supported by several recognized major Wesleyan scholars, whose very support lends considerable credence to their faulty conclusions. Second, this rebuttal corrects a serious misunderstanding of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience, a misunderstanding that can contribute to misunderstanding several major roles of emotion to be found in Wesley's corpus, and even to misinterpretation of Wesley's theology, itself.

A Special Analysis of *Aldersgate Reconsidered*

One of the biggest obstacles to understanding John Wesley (1703-1791) involves the natural evolution of a living language. A change, wrought over time, in the meaning of just one word that continues in common usage, can produce serious consequences if one is not aware of that change. When looking at the writings of Wesley from a twentieth or twenty-first-century viewpoint, changes in language, manners, and customs across a span of centuries necessarily lead to a situation that could be described as cross-cultural, and therefore prone to misunderstanding.

This concern of language change is certainly not new. Campbell (1788-1866), who assembled a New Testament from the translations of others, begins his preface by observing that

a living language is continually changing, [and] in a century or two, come to have a signification very different from that which was once attached to them; nay, some are known to convey ideas not only different from, but contrary to, their first signification. [He notes that although books] written in a style that obtains the reputation of being both correct and elegant, serve to give stability to a language, [yet] the cankering hand of time moulders away, and they cease to be a defence against invasion and revolution. And books, however reputable as the standards of a living tongue, and however much read and admired, are unable to maintain a long controversy against the versatility and love of novelty, characteristic of the human mind.⁷³

⁷² Randy Maddox, ed., 1990.

⁷³ Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), ed., 2nd Ed., 1828, *The Sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ, Commonly Styled the New Testament*, iii. This quotation is abridged in the style of Wesley; words in brackets have been added for grammatical completeness.

Campbell expresses well the situation facing Wesleyan scholars today, and his conclusion as to how these changes occur may have some merit.

In order to illustrate this significant, key point of language evolution the following examples are presented. Failure to recognize the cross-cultural nature of Wesley's soteriology allows a late twentieth-century writer to make a simple mistake in interpreting Wesley's Aldersgate experience as one that leads to "destructive results."⁷⁴ Three others repeat the same error: her editor, the writer of another essay in the same book, and a later reviewer. In *Aldersgate Reconsidered*,⁷⁵ the lead essayist attempts to debunk the "legend" of Wesley's Aldersgate experience.⁷⁶ She begins by questioning the historical accuracy of the records of this story,⁷⁷ and asks a most pertinent, and valid, question: "What does an 'Aldersgate spirituality' do to us?" She then provides an answer that the remainder of her essay is designed to prove: "that the effects of 'Aldersgate spirituality' are, in fact, very destructive."⁷⁸ Her main objection is Wesley's use of the word *simple* when he describes the Spirit-filled life as "straightforward, *simple*, and loving."⁷⁹

Second, she says that the logical result of believing in such a *simple* life is "the conviction that our prayer should always be appropriate to the kind of simple people we ought to be - a spontaneous expression of our heart."⁸⁰ She contends that Wesley's use of the word *simple* has caused "United Methodists [to] have a problem with human complexity," and even a "fear of complexity."⁸¹ This attitude, the writer claims, results in such *destructive* thinking, as for example, that Christians should have a "simple childlike faith," "perfect trust in God," "unquestioned acceptance of anything life dishes out," and that one should "pray with so much trust

⁷⁴ Roberta C. Bondi, *Aldersgate and Patterns of Methodist Spirituality*, in "Aldersgate Reconsidered," Randy Maddox, ed., 1990, 21-32.

⁷⁵ Randy L. Maddox, ed., 1990.

⁷⁶ Roberta C. Bondi, 1990, 'Aldersgate and Patterns of Methodist Spirituality,' in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 21-32. Bondi pejoratively uses the word "legend" three times in reference to Aldersgate. Fr. Maximin Piette was one of the first Wesleyan critics to refer to Wesley's Aldersgate experience as "legend," in his 1925 book entitled *La Reaction Wesleyenne dans l'Evolution Protestante* (2nd ed., 1927, *La Réaction de John Wesley dans l'évolution protestantisme*. This thesis uses the 1937ed., published in English under the title of *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*, translated by The Rev. J. B. Howard, where Piette's use of "legend" may be found on, e.g., 306.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 21. This is a legitimate question for any researcher to ask.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 22.

⁷⁹ Ibid. Bondi uses the word "simple" 19 times in her essay, always with the meaning of easy, uncomplicated, or not complex. Italics are mine.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 22.

⁸¹ Ibid.

that God will grant their requests.”⁸² But, as Bondi rightly observes, in reality, human beings are complicated, full of anxiety and mixed emotions, sometimes angry and restless, distracted, and guilt-ridden. In fact, she is justified in saying that there are not many who could be described as *simple*, uncomplicated Christians⁸³... but only if the late twentieth-century meaning of the word *simple* is used. Therefore, she concludes, Aldersgate equals *theological disaster*!

Does this interpretation of such a simple word capture Wesley’s meaning? Bett has this to say about the eighteenth-century usage of the word *simple*, as he provides the derivation of this word.

Think of the metaphorical uses derived from the simple act of twisting together, which is the first thing done in making thread for weaving. When we use the word "simplicity" we are really speaking of "singleness of texture", and so of what is single minded and single-hearted (though the word has later acquired the worse sense of "foolishness"), for the Latin *simplex*, *simplicitas*, is from *semel*, once, and *plicare*, to fold, and means "of one fold". So "duplicity" means "twofoldness", and has acquired the moral sense of deceitfulness; and "triplex" means "three-fold", and "complex" means "folded together", and "multiplex" means "many-fold".⁸⁴

When Wesley uses the word *simple* in the various contexts cited by Bondi, he does not intend that the meaning should be taken as uncomplicated or easy. Rather, his use of the word *simple*, as in *simple faith*, refers to a faith that is *unmixed* with impurities such as unbelief or selfishness. In other words, he speaks of a faith consisting of *one fold*. The OED cites Wesley:

Simple, adj.

I.2. Free from, devoid of, pride, ostentation, or display; humble, unpretentious.

1738 J. Wesley Psalms XXX.ii, 2. Free from, devoid of, pride, ostentation, or display; humble, unpretentious.

OED Source: John Wesley, 1738, *Psalm XXXII*, verse 2, line 7, in “A collection of psalms and hymns.”⁸⁵

Here is the verse to which the OED refers.

Blest is the Man, to whom his LORD
No more imputes Iniquity,
Whose Spirit is by Grace restor’d,
From all the Guile of Satan free;
Free from Design or selfish Aim,

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 23.

⁸⁴ Henry Bett, 1936, *Wanderings Among Words*, 178-179. Parentheses, italics, and quotation marks are Bett’s.

⁸⁵ OED Online, *Simple*, accessed 9/14/2013. This publication also provides numerous examples of Bondi’s use of “simple.”

Harmless, and pure, and undefil'd,
A Simple Follower of the Lamb,
And harmless as a new-born Child.⁸⁶

In this verse, the Wesley brothers equate “a Simple Follower of the Lamb,” one “whose Spirit is by grace restor'd,” that is, the sanctified Christian, with one *whose faith is unmix'd* with guile and selfishness, and who, therefore, is “harmless, and pure, and undefil'd.”

Indeed, Wesley, himself, consistently defines this word in the various dictionaries that he publishes. Here is his unabridged entry for *simple*:

SIMPLE, unmixed; single; innocent; honest, artless, silly.⁸⁷

A Dictionary of the English Language, published by Samuel Johnson, yields this definition for *simple*:

SIMPLE, a. [*simp* x [*simplex*], Latin.]
1. Plain; artless; unskilled; undesigning; sincere; harmless. *Hooker*.
2. Uncompounded; unmingled; single; only one; plain; not complicated. *Watts*.
3. Silly; not wise; not cunning. *Prov.[erbs]*⁸⁸

Other assemblers of dictionaries provide the same or similar definitions.⁸⁹

In the Wesley brothers' usage of the word *simple*, there is no evidence supporting Bondi's interpretation as a lack of complexity, or the idea that this word means that the Christian life is free from anxiety. What can be seen by those familiar with the lives of John and Charles Wesley is that when the brothers said they loved the poor, they meant it. They never engaged in *duplicit*y. They never tried to steal from their parishioners. They were of the kind whose entire life was but a single-fold, or simplex, as Bett would say. Despite doubts, waverings, and periods of despondency, Wesley always looks only to God for help, and this single eye towards

⁸⁶ John Wesley and Charles Wesley, 1743, 2nd Ed., *A collection of Psalms and Hymns*, London, 2:70. The 1738 ed. was not available; Richard Green, 1906, claims there are only two known copies of the 1738 (first) ed. One copy is in the Didsbury College Library, and the other in the Archbishopial Library at Lambeth; see Green, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley*, 12.

⁸⁷ John Wesley, 1764, *The Complete English Dictionary, Explaining most of those Hard Words, Which are found in the Best English Writers*, 2nd Ed. JW published at least three editions, 1753, 1764, 1777, and all ed. assign this same definition.

⁸⁸ Samuel Johnson, 1756, Vol. 2, *A Dictionary of the English Language: in Which the Words are deduced from their Originals, Explained in their different Meanings, and Authorized by the Names of the writers in whose Works they are found. Abstracted from the Folio Edition, by the Author Samuel Johnson, A.M. To which is prefixed, a Grammar of the English Language*. Brackets are Johnson's.

⁸⁹ This list includes Wm. Kenrick, 1773; Elisha Coles, 1717; and D. Fenning, 1775.

God, *unmixed with avarice, deceit, corruption or ambition* is the character trait that makes him “a *simple* follower of the Lamb.”

Wesley writes, “I love the poor, in many of them I find pure, genuine grace, *unmixed* with paint, folly, and affectation,”⁹⁰ “*unmixed* with worldly desires, or anxious cares for even the necessities of life.”⁹¹ These phrases express the simple, or simplex, meaning of “an *unmixed* state of holiness,” that is, *simple* holiness.⁹² Again, Wesley writes, “Now this great work, this one thing needful, is the renewal of our fallen nature.”⁹³ “Let us well observe, that our Lord doth not call this our main concern, our great business, the chief thing needful, but the *one* thing—all others being either parts of this or quite foreign to the end of life. On this then let us fix our single view, our pure unmixed intention; regarding nothing at all, small or great, but as it stands referred to this.”⁹⁴

The first half of Wesleyan hymn 510 expresses what an “Aldersgate spirituality does for one,” by empowering one to truly have “a simple love for God and neighbor:”

Our friendship sanctify and guide;
Unmixed with selfishness and pride,
 Thy glory be our single aim!
 In all our intercourse below
 Still let us in thy footsteps go,
 And never meet but in thy name.
*Fix on thyself our single eye!*⁹⁵

Here, the Wesley brothers equate the use of the word “single,” with the word “unmixed.” Both Wesley and Johnson, in their respective dictionaries, equate simple with single, as explained on the preceding page.⁹⁶ The second referent of “single eye” is not, of course, to a one-eyed Christian, but to a Christian who looks *only* to God for help, in the same manner that one looks *only* to God for “simple

⁹⁰ John Wesley, cited by Albert Outler, Intro. to the BCE, 1:17. Italics are mine.

⁹¹ Ibid., Ser. 21: ‘Upon Our Lord’s Sermon On The Mount, Discourse the First,’ BCE 1:474-475. Italics are mine.

⁹² Ibid., Ser. 64: ‘The New Creation,’ BCE 2:510. Italics are mine.

⁹³ Ibid., Ser. 146: ‘The One Thing Needful,’ BCE, 4:354.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 358. Italics are Wesley’s.

⁹⁵ Ibid., Hymn 510, verse 1a, ‘Our Friendship Sanctify and Guide,’ BCE 7:701. Italics are mine.

⁹⁶ Wesley prepared the same sermon, entitled ‘Hypocrisy in Oxford,’ in English and Latin. Outler suggests that these sermons are “a single project in two different drafts,” in his ‘Introductory Comments,’ BCE 4:398. In section I.2 of these sermons, Wesley equates the English word **simplicity**, in Sermon 150: ‘Hypocrisy [sic] in Oxford [English],’ with the Latin **simplex**, in Sermon 151: ‘Hypocrisy in Oxford [Latin].’ JW, BCE 4:394, 410.

faith,” that is, for a faith “unmixed” with unbelief.⁹⁷ As analysis will show in Chapter three, it will take the Wesley brothers many years to finally and truly learn that they must look “only to God” for “simple faith.”⁹⁸

Thus, Wesley’s meaning is clear. Wesley, being an educated man who wrote a handbook on the importance of logic for his preachers,⁹⁹ organized his thoughts and clearly expressed his meaning. He certainly understood the difficulties involved in living a Christian life because he had unsuccessfully tried to do so from his first conversion in 1725 to his Aldersgate experience in 1738, a period of thirteen years. To use a twentieth-century term, he understood that it was no *simple* thing, no easy or uncomplicated task, to be a real Christian. But Wesley was not a man of the twentieth century, for he belonged to the entire eighteenth century. Indeed, without understanding this background and context it is impossible to determine his true meaning when he rightly said that the only kind of Christianity *is* a “simple Christianity.”

Bondi complains about today’s Christians: “Having once become Christian (i.e., having had our hearts warmed), we believe that we ought also to be the kind of people who love God and our neighbor in a simple and spontaneous way.”¹⁰⁰ That is, once “having had our hearts warmed,” we no longer have any problems. Life becomes simple. But, in reality, life is not simple, writes Bondi, and this is the conundrum that produces her destructive conclusion.

Bondi asks, “What does an ‘Aldersgate spirituality’ do to us? What happens when we expect that, from the day we become Christian, we ought to be full of simple love for God and neighbor?”¹⁰¹ Wesley would answer that “Aldersgate spirituality,” among other things, sets our emotions right, *enabling* us to love others with a love that is *not mixed with unbelief, greed, or malice*. For, Wesley teaches the universal, or total, depravity of fallen human nature, and that through the Fall all aspects of human nature, including one’s emotions, are tainted by sin.¹⁰² He also

⁹⁷ Quotation marks indicate words used by Wesley, immediately above.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ John Wesley, 1750 (1st Ed.), 1756 (2nd Ed.), 1790 (3rd Ed.), *A Compendium of Logick*, Bristol: Felix Farley.

¹⁰⁰ *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 21. Parenthesis is Bondi’s.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 22.

¹⁰² John Wesley, e.g., Ser. 74: ‘Of The Church,’ BCE 3:53.

teaches the importance of seeking God's full cure for this human *disease*:¹⁰³ the gift of new birth, and the remaking of one's fallen nature to now conform with the image of Christ, which is the one thing needful.

One godly man that Wesley greatly admired was Isaac Ambrose (1604-1664). In fact, Wesley admired him so much that he reprinted, in his *Christian Library*, only a slightly abridged edition of Ambrose's one-volume complete works of 1674. In Wesley's short *Life of Isaac Ambrose*, he writes this estimate of Mr. Ambrose.¹⁰⁴

But as for Mr. Ambrose, he lived and died a Nonconformist; and was a man of that substantial worth, that eminent piety, and that exemplary life, both as a minister and a Christian, that 'tis to be lamented that the world should not have the benefit of particular memoirs concerning him, from some able hand.

He was holy in his life, happy in his death, and honoured by God and all good men.

Wesley, himself, through the words he appropriates from this godly man, can be cited to answer Bondi's question. For this thesis, and for Wesley, an *Aldersgate experience* is a vital step in alleviating the natural human condition brought about by the Fall, which condition, says Wesley, is,

in a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed, all the inner man is full of sin, and here is no part that is good, *no not one*. How needful now is a *new birth* to a man in this case? Can he enter into heaven that savours all of earth? Will those precious gates of gold and pearls open to a sinner? NO! he must be new moulded and sanctified.¹⁰⁵

Better he had never been born, than not to be *new born*. Except by a new birth, man is *without* Christ; for if *any man be in* Christ, *he is a new creature*: and if he be not in *Christ*, what hopes of that man? It is only *Christ* that is the *Way* to heaven; besides Him there is no *Way*, no *Truth*, no *Life*.¹⁰⁶

A main thrust of Ambrose is clearly to explain the miraculous phenomenon of new birth and complete salvation for the sinner in body, soul, and spirit.¹⁰⁷ This paper contends that this grand theme captures well the main thrust of Wesley's

¹⁰³ Wesley frequently writes of sin as a disease, cf. Sermon 14, 'The Repentance of Believers,' BCE 1:347. See my article for a full discussion: 'Our Personal Core Identity: A Wesleyan Perspective,' *The Asbury Journal*, 65:1, 6-29, citing 18-21.

¹⁰⁴ John Wesley, 1752, 'The Life of Mr. Isaac Ambrose,' in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of The Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity, Which have been publish'd in the English Tongue*, Vol. 13, *Extracts from the Works of Isaac Ambrose, Sometime Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire, To Which is Prefix'd Some Account of His Life*, 52-53.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 58. Italics and capitals are Wesley's.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 59. Italics are Wesley's.

¹⁰⁷ John Wesley, 1752, *The Christian Library*, Vols. 13-15, abridgment of *The Compleat Works of that Eminent Minister of God's Word Mr. Isaac Ambrose*. Ambrose's Works were first published, posthumously, in 1674.

entire doctrine and ministry, but primarily focuses on “the affections,” both before and after one’s own Aldersgate experience.

Opinions of an Editor and an Independent Reviewer

Maddox is the editor of *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, and it seems surprising that a Wesleyan Scholar of his rightly deserved high stature would fail to notice Bondi’s error. In his Introduction to *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, he commends Schmidt for downplaying Aldersgate.¹⁰⁸ In a review article, Collins also notices that Maddox does not consider Aldersgate to be of much overall significance, and this fact may help to explain this anomaly of missing the true understanding of Wesley’s use of the word *simple*.¹⁰⁹

Collins notices Bondi’s mistake, and also her destructive conclusion. However, he attributes her error to “confusing the doctrines of initial and entire sanctification,” which she does confuse, rather than the true cause of simply misunderstanding a *simple* word.¹¹⁰ Bondi’s confusion between initial and entire sanctification is evident when she writes: “Having once become Christian (i.e., having had our hearts warmed)...”¹¹¹ It is generally acknowledged that Wesley formally became a Christian at his ordination in 1725, if not before this date, and thirteen years later he experiences “entire sanctification” (Collins’s words) during his Aldersgate experience of 1738.

Jean Miller Schmidt, another essayist in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, agrees with Bondi’s twentieth-century misunderstanding of the eighteenth-century word *simple*.¹¹² Although Collins knew about Bondi’s error, he makes no mention that a second essayist compounds the same error.

Schmidt is careful to stress that she does not reject the event called Aldersgate, but rather the interpretation that many today give to Wesley’s 1738 experience,¹¹³ and writes:

¹⁰⁸ Randy L. Maddox, ‘Introduction’ to, 1990, *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 19.

¹⁰⁹ Kenneth J. Collins, 1991, ‘Other Thoughts on Aldersgate: Has the Conversionist Paradigm Collapsed?’, in *Methodist History*, 30:1:10.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹¹ Roberta Bondi, ‘Aldersgate and Patterns of Methodist Spirituality,’ in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 23.

¹¹² Jean Miller Schmidt, 1990, ‘Strangely Warmed: The Place of Aldersgate in the Methodist Canon,’ in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 109-119.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 109.

Bondi is right that "Aldersgate spirituality," as we have made it into a pattern for our own spirituality, does have the characteristics she described (a *simple* faith, free of complexity and ambiguity).¹¹⁴

This statement may be quite true, but only with a proper understanding of "simple," because Schmidt qualifies it with the phrase "as we have made it into a pattern for our own spirituality," but it also demonstrates that she accepts Bondi's erroneous twentieth-century definition of the eighteenth-century word *simple*.

Schmidt indicates considerable understanding of Wesley's Aldersgate experience. To do her justice a longer quotation is provided that illustrates this fact.

Surely it was at Aldersgate that John Wesley's experience of being grounded in God's love freed him from his compulsive attempts at self-justification and enabled him to love God and other people in a new way. Did Aldersgate change anything? I believe Wesley *was* a new man after Aldersgate, as are all those who have experienced the forgiving, accepting, and reconciling love of God in their lives. But his faith was confirmed even more powerfully by the fruits of his preaching. (In Albert Outler's words, "he had preached faith until *others* had it, and now his own was confirmed by *theirs*!"). We ought to be encouraged to know that Wesley's spiritual struggles were not all resolved at Aldersgate. His was not the kind of "simple faith" we have come to associate with "Aldersgate spirituality."¹¹⁵

This paragraph, including the final sentence, is quite true *because of the included qualifiers*, but does Schmidt also reject Wesley's own (eighteenth-century) statements that he, Wesley, really had, and lived out, "a simple faith," and that genuine Christianity does, indeed, come about by means of "simple faith?"

The *simple* mistake of interpreting Wesley's Aldersgate experience as one that leads to *destructive results* can also lead to serious misunderstanding, and the importance of this case cannot be overstated. If a goal of religious writers is to faithfully transfer the faith to the next generation, Bondi's mistake removes the very essence and power of Wesley's entire ministry and message. Because emotion plays such an important part of Wesley's Aldersgate experience, his experience will be dealt with more fully in chapter three. The purpose, here, is to provide background information that is needed in order to reach reliable conclusions when reading Wesley, and to emphasize the importance of drawing attention to a critical mistake that may be misleading many who are seeking truth from Wesley and Wesleyan Methodism.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 118. Italics, quotation marks, and Parentheses are Schmidt's.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 118-119. Parenthesis and italics are Schmidt's.

A Second Error

Earlier, it was noted that understanding Aldersgate is a key part of the background needed in order to comprehend the writings of the Wesley brothers.¹¹⁶ Some writers, such as Schmidt and Maddox,¹¹⁷ minimize the importance of Aldersgate partly because they have accepted a faulty conclusion reached by Outler. Schmidt makes the following statement:

The Aldersgate story as such drops out of sight in Wesley's writings after 1740, and the experience itself was followed by "further crises of equal, or nearly equal moment."¹¹⁸

Outler is mistaken when he says that Wesley never refers to "Aldersgate" after 1740. As Collins also notes,¹¹⁹ George Croft Cell discovered that Wesley uses "a double system of chronology" in making references to Aldersgate that are "numbered by the score," and that occur "over a fifty-year period."¹²⁰ Here is only one example from Cell to illustrate his significant chronological discovery.

Wesley wrote in 1778 [first date]: Forty years ago [second date] I knew and preached every Christian doctrine which I preach now.¹²¹

Subtracting 40 years from the year 1778 is, indeed, a clear reference to 1738, and Aldersgate was the most significant event in that year, as Cell ably demonstrates multiple times. Therefore, as Cell proves, Wesley does make many subsequent references to Aldersgate throughout his fifty-year ministry.

Thus far, examples have been provided that demonstrate the prime importance of recognizing the cross-cultural nature of language changes across time so that Bondi's idea of *destruction* might be avoided. In doing so, small portions pertinent to the background of the Wesley brothers' lives have been examined.

The Etymology of the Word *Emotion*

The discussion above, regarding the cross-cultural nature of Wesley's language as compared with contemporary language, necessitates consideration of another word

¹¹⁶ See this thesis, 16: from Edwin Lewis, 1938, in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 80-81.

¹¹⁷ Maddox, 'Introduction' to *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 19.

¹¹⁸ Jean Miller Schmidt, 'Strangely Warmed,' in: *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 109, where Schmidt cites Albert Outler, in *John Wesley*, p. 52.

¹¹⁹ Kenneth J. Collins, 1989, 'Twentieth-Century Interpretations of John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience: Coherence or Confusion,' in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 24:22-24.

¹²⁰ George Croft Cell, 1935, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*, 185-187.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 186. Brackets are mine to highlight Cell's claim of using a "double-system" of chronology.

that might be the most important word in this thesis. The word *emotion*, used in the title of this thesis and as applied to Wesley's writings, could be construed as being somewhat misleading and therefore this issue must be addressed. Gardiner¹²² and Dixon¹²³ demonstrate that, beginning around 1820, Wesley's eighteenth-century word, *emotion*, begins its evolutionary journey of transformation in earnest. By the end of the nineteenth century the meaning of this one word universally includes all of the concepts contained in Wesley's eighteenth-century vocabulary, including Wesley's understanding of passion, appetite, affection, frames and feelings, temper, sentiments and emotion, all now bundled into one single word that we, today, call *emotion*.

This comprehensive, twenty-first century word, *emotion*, is used in the title to draw attention to the fact that during Wesley's lifetime its meaning was limited to only a vague agitation of mind, a "stirring, motion, trouble of mind," as Wesley, himself, defines this word in the three dictionaries that he published.¹²⁴ Wesley uses the word emotion only fourteen times in *The Bicentennial Edition of Wesley's Works*.¹²⁵ An example from Wesley's diary demonstrates this vague meaning.

May 13, 1751. I learned the particulars of Mr. R[omley]'s case, of which I had heard but a confused account before. 'In November last he was desired to baptize a child of John Varley's. It was observed, his voice, which had been lost several years, was entirely restored. He read the office *with great emotion and many tears*, so as to astonish the whole congregation.¹²⁶

¹²² Harry Norman Gardiner (1855-1927), 1937, *Feeling and Emotion, A History of Theories*. This is the first (the second is by Thomas Dixon) of two modern books that provide excellent histories of the word emotion.

¹²³ Thomas Dixon, 2003, *From Passions to Emotions, The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*.

¹²⁴ John Wesley, *The Complete English Dictionary*, 1st Ed., 1753. This citation is the full, unabridged definition from all three of Wesley's dictionaries. Wesley has this note printed on the title page: 'N.B. The author assures you, he thinks this is the best English dictionary in the world.' Wesley's 2nd and 3rd editions of 1764 and 1777 respectively, repeat this definition verbatim. In the Preface of his second and third editions, Wesley acknowledges Samuel Johnson as his chief resource. Johnson's two-volume edition of 1756 ("abstracted from the Folio Edition") defines emotion as "[a] disturbance of mind; vehemence of passion; Dryden," *A Dictionary of the English Language*.

Concerning the publication of the three editions of Wesley's dictionary, Green notes that "although Wesley's name does not appear on the title-page or appended to the preface, there is no doubt as to his authorship, and that Wesley includes his *Dictionary* in the lists of books that he has published," Richard Green, 1906, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley, A Bibliography*, entry 162 for the year 1753, 80-81.

George Osborn also documents Wesley's authorship of this Dictionary, in *Outlines of Wesleyan Bibliography; or, a Record of Methodist Literature from the Beginning*, 30.

¹²⁵ In contrast, for instance, Wesley uses the word passion some eighty times in the BCE.

¹²⁶ John Wesley, 'Journal and Diaries III,' BCE 20:388, Brackets are Ward's and Heitzenrater's; italics are mine.

Wesley and those preceding him (going back at least to Heraclitus and Plato) use many different emotional terms that, today, are conflated down to this single term, terms that provide nuance and refinement, often with a religious connotation, for what we, today, would call *emotion*. The desire to strip the concept of emotion of its religious connotation is the driving force behind this transformation. From a scientific standpoint, this objective is worthy and desirable because it would not be reasonable to expect scientists to include such metaphysical concepts as soul and spirit, or the idea of a vestige of the image of God residing in humanity, in their research venues. Herein lies one problem of understanding Wesley, the theologian, for this conflation necessarily also causes a loss of nuance, and therefore of full comprehension of Wesley's meaning.

A subsidiary goal of this thesis is to transfer Wesley's ideas and meaning into modern application, but to do justice to this task one must understand all of Wesley's language. For instance, Wesley's belief that humanity was created in the image of God, and that vestiges of that image remain in everyone, is fundamental to Christian understanding. Consider this emotion-laden excerpt from Wesley, taken from a series of his sentences beginning with "I rejoice." The emotional words have been italicized, although there is more emotional content here than just the emphasized words.

I *rejoice* because he gives me to *feel* in myself "the mind that was in Christ": simplicity, a single eye to him in every *motion of my heart*,¹²⁷ power always to fix the *loving* eye of my soul on him who "*loved* me, and gave himself for me", to aim at him alone, at his glorious will, in all I think or speak or do; purity, *desiring* nothing more but God, "crucifying the flesh with its *affections* and *lusts*", "setting my *affections* on things above, not on things of the earth"; holiness, a recovery of the image of God, a renewal of soul after his likeness; and godly sincerity, directing all my words and works so as to conduce to his glory.¹²⁸

If the *lusts* [passions], *affections*, and *motion of the heart* of which Wesley speaks are reduced to the word *emotion*, then this reduction necessarily will result in considerable loss of meaning.

Although earlier writers, such as Hume,¹²⁹ began to substitute the word emotion for these various theologically laced emotional terms, this transformation did not

¹²⁷ Note that Wesley, in this phrase, uses his eighteenth century concept of *simple*: a single eye to [God,] (that is not mixed with unbelief). Parenthesis mine.

¹²⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 12, 'The Witness of Our own Spirit,' BCE 1:310.

¹²⁹ Ibid.; Dixon, 2003, notes that Hume (1711-1776) was the first writer to liberally use the word emotion, 104-105. Although Hume more often uses the terms *passions* and *affections* he sometimes seems to equate emotion, passion, and affect. E.g., in 1739 Hume wrote, in *A Treatise of Human*

begin in earnest until metaphysician¹³⁰ and medical doctor Thomas Brown (1780-1820), in his three-volume, posthumously published book, *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*,¹³¹ intentionally conflates affections, passions, sentiments, appetites, and so forth, which include such concepts as hate and love, joy and misery, serenity and anger, into a single term: *emotion*.¹³² As Gardiner and Dixon have established, Brown's terminological use of emotion was immediately and readily accepted by many in the secular, scientific community, and this terminology is now universally accepted even though few have ever heard of Brown, as evidenced by the lack of contemporary authors referencing Brown's name or works.¹³³

The core of Brown's ideas concerning emotion can be found in Lecture LII (52). Brown reasons that emotion, although understood by all, defies definition, for "verbal definition" is "as truly impossible, as to define sweetness, or bitterness, a sound or a smell, in any other way, than by a statement of the circumstances in which they arise."¹³⁴ Throughout the three volumes he completes the evolution of the word emotion, begun by writers such as Hume, by *using* this word as it is used in contemporary speech. He also employs the words *passion* and *affect* in the same sense as one would today. Today, while the word *emotion* is universally utilized, no consensus by authorities has ever been reached regarding the definition of this word; there are only many definitions of emotion, with each definition geared to the specialty of the definer, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

Nature, Vol. 2, "But tho' surprise be agreeable in itself, yet as it puts the spirits in agitation, it not only augments our agreeable affections, but also our painful, according to the foregoing principle, that every emotion, which precedes or attends a passion, is easily converted into it," 2:261-262.

More often than not, Hume uses the word emotion according to its eighteenth-century meaning.

¹³⁰ The Preface to Thomas Brown's 3rd ed., 1818, *Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*, begins with these words, "The Essay which follows is now presented to the lovers of Metaphysical Disquisition."

¹³¹ Op. Cit., 3 Vols., 1820. Because the 1820 ed. is not accessible, the publication of 1822-1824 is used.

¹³² Thomas Dixon, 2003, *From Passions to Emotions*, 109-110.

¹³³ Harry Gardiner, 1937, and Thomas Dixon, 2003, have written extensively on Brown. Dixon, 2010, published a book devoted exclusively to Brown, *Thomas Brown, Selected Philosophical Writings*, Charlottesville, VA: Imprint Academic Philosophy Documentation Center. Dixon also authored an article, 2012, 'Revolted Passions,' in *Faith, Rationality and the Passions*, ed. by Sarah Coakely, Andover, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

¹³⁴ Thomas Brown, 1824, *Lectures*, LII: *Retrospect of the orders of the phenomena of mind, already considered, of emotions, classification of them, as immediate, retrospective, or prospective, and each of these subdivided, as it involves, or does not involve some moral affection. I. Immediate Emotions, involving no moral affection, II. Cheerfulness, melancholy*, 2:251.

An Understanding of Emotion

In order to accomplish the goal of investigating the role of emotion in Wesley's theology, and of transferring his ideas and meaning into modern application, an understanding of the emotional milieu is required.¹³⁵ However, this task poses difficulty for a number of reasons. As noted above, no consensus among the experts has ever been reached as to the specific definition of the word *emotion*, nor is there agreement as to the *meaning* of specific emotions, such as *love* or *joy*, especially within a theological setting.¹³⁶

There are many definitions of emotion, but each is paired to the specialty of the definer. Roberts notes that anthropologists deem emotions to be “culturally constructed (Lutz, 1998).” Some neuroscientists see emotion as “neurological processes (LeDoux).” Psychologists may think emotion is “consciousness of bodily sensation” that is linked to “emotional behavior” (Damasio, 1994). An evolutionary psychologist could consider emotion as “evolutionary adaption (Griffiths, 1997; LeDoux, 1998).”¹³⁷

Frijda, a psychologist whose cognitive theories on emotion will be utilized in this thesis, sees emotion as “action-tendencies,”¹³⁸ and it will be demonstrated, below, that John Wesley, himself, maintains this same idea. Nussbaum and Solomon suggest “that emotions are judgments,” another theory that will be considered, but not used, in this thesis.¹³⁹

At its most elementary level, emotion can be considered from either a non-cognitive or a cognitive perspective. The modern non-cognitive theory of emotion began with Rene Descartes' publication of *The Passions of the Soule, In Three Books. The First, Treating of the Passions in Generall, and Occasionally of the Whole Nature of Man. The Second, Of the Number, and Order of the Passions, and the Explication of the Six Primitive Ones. The Third, Of Particular Passions*, in 1650.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Matthew Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, 54, writes, “Holding a logical and informed theory of emotion will prove significant in the interpretation of the New Testament.” This paper applies this principle in *interpreting* the role of emotion in the theology of John Wesley.

¹³⁶ See this thesis. 47 ff. for my discussion on Theological Lexicography and the meaning of *love*..

¹³⁷ Robert C. Roberts, 2007, *Spiritual Emotions*, 8.

¹³⁸ Nico H. Frijda (1927-2015), *The Emotions*, 69 ff.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ A more modern ed. is, 1911, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes Rendered into English by Elizabeth S. Haldane, LL.D. and G. R. T Ross, M.A., D.Phil.*, 1:329-427. A comparison of these two versions confirms that the differences between these English translations made from Descartes'

Non-cognitive theories claim that cognition is not *required* in order to experience emotion. Indeed, some non-cognitivist theorists, such as Watson, Skinner and Hull, go so far as to say that mental cognition not only plays no part in emotion, but even the “concepts of ‘will,’ ‘cognition,’ [and] ‘intellect’ cannot be accepted so long as it pretends to be dealing with a mental world,” because there is no such thing as mental cognition!¹⁴¹ Arnold says that “behavioristic theories assume that the [physical] stimulus arouses the response.”¹⁴²

The modern roots of today’s cognitive, or appraisal, theories of emotion spring from Magda Arnold (1903–2002), who cites among a long list of cognitive theorists, the “influential theory by Frijda.”¹⁴³ She claims, first of all, that “action tendency and emotion are one and the same thing,” and Frijda agrees with Arnold’s definition of emotion as “felt action tendency;” “emotions are tendencies to establish, maintain, or disrupt a relationship with the environment.”¹⁴⁴

In other words, in general terms, the cognitive theory of emotion, initially developed by Arnold and Lazarus in the 1960’s,¹⁴⁵ asserts that an emotion begins with an experience that could be either real or imagined, and this experience generates mental cognition, which becomes a spring-board, or in more formal words an action tendency, or incentive, for some type of action that may include a physiological response: thus, an emotion is born. For this discussion, it does not matter if action is actually taken, only that an incentive, or spring-board, for action, is created. The field of study regarding emotional regulation is concerned with whether or not an action *should be* taken, but this aspect falls outside of the scope of this thesis.

John Wesley Ahead Of His Time

John Wesley was an advocate, of sorts, of the cognitive theory of emotion more than two hundred years before this theory was propounded. Wesley published an edition of Edwards’ book that he, Wesley, abridged, entitled, *A Treatise Concerning*

French are mostly due to changes in language over time, for each tr. uses words appropriate for their own period. Here, Wesley’s dictionary is a great help in understanding 17th and 18th century terms.

¹⁴¹ B. F. Skinner, 1938, *The Behavior of Organisms*, 441.

¹⁴² Magda Arnold, 1960, *Emotion and Personality, Psychological Aspects*, 1:150.

¹⁴³ Gerald Clore and Andrew Ortony, 2008, ‘Appraisal Theories, How Cognition Shapes Affect into Emotion,’ in *Handbook of Emotions*, Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett, Eds., 628.

¹⁴⁴ Nico H. Frijda, 1986, *The Emotions*, 71.

¹⁴⁵ Magda Arnold and Richard Lazarus, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Emotion,” 2018, 11-12.

Religious Affections, In Three Parts, with the preface dated *Bristol, Sept. 1, 1773*,¹⁴⁶ in which he condenses Edwards words as follows:

2. The author of human nature has not only given affections to men, but has made them the spring of their actions. As the Affections not only belong to the human nature, but are a great part of it, so holy Affections do not only belong to true Religion, but are a very great part of it. And as true Religion is of a practical nature, and the Affections are the spring of men's actions, it must consist very much in them. The Affections we see are the springs that set men a going in all the affairs of life. Take away *these*, and there would be no activity among mankind, or any earnest pursuit whatsoever. And as in worldly things worldly affections are the spring of men's actions; so in religious matters, the spring of their actions are religious affections. He that has knowledge only, without affection, never is engaged in the business of Religion.¹⁴⁷

Here, Wesley, although he had never heard of the cognitive theory of emotion, repeatedly set forth the idea that affections are “the spring of [a person’s] actions,” and while his statement, above, expresses only the most basic tenet of cognitive theories of emotion – namely, that an emotion is an *action tendency* – his, and also Edward’s, statements depict, by today’s standards, tremendous insight concerning human nature. It remains to be seen what Wesley thought the word affection might mean. Wesley continues his abridgment:

4. The holy Scriptures place Religion very much in the Affections: Such as *fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal*. They place so much in godly *fear*; that it is often spoken of, as the character of those that are truly religious, that “they tremble at God’s word,” “fear before him,” “are afraid of his judgments;” and a compellation commonly given them in Scripture, is, “fearers of God,” or “they that fear the Lord.” And true Godliness in general is very often called “the fear of God.” So *hope* in God and his promises is often spoken of, as a considerable part of Religion. It is mentioned as one of the three great things of which Religion consists, 1 Cor. 13:13. It is so great a part, that the Apostle says, we are saved by hope, Rom. 8:24. Hope in the Lord is also frequently mentioned as the character of good men; and this and religious fear are, once and again, joined together, as jointly descriptive of the godly man. In like manner much is placed in *love*, love to God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the people of God, and to mankind.¹⁴⁸

In the above lengthy, but highly interesting, quote Wesley links the word affections with terms such as: fear, hope, love, hatred, desire, joy, sorrow, gratitude, compassion, and zeal; and phrases such as godly fear, afraid of [God’s] judgments, fearers of God; hope, and religious fear. Today, these eighteenth-century terms for

¹⁴⁶ Op. Cit., Richard Green (1829-1907), writes that the earliest separate edition of this abridgment is dated 1801, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley, A Bibliography*, 2nd ed., 1906; 170.

¹⁴⁷ Jonathan Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, 1801, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*. Italics, punctuation and spelling are Wesley’s; underlining is mine. 8.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 8-9.

affection are easily recognized as twenty-first-century words depicting emotions. Above, Wesley encourages all to *love*, have love for God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and love for the people of God, and to mankind.

Wesley stresses the importance of religious affection when he defines what he means by the term *gracious affections*:

I come now to the second thing appertaining to the *trial* of religious Affections, viz. to take notice of some things, wherein those Affections that are spiritual and gracious, differ from those that are not so.

1. Affections truly spiritual and gracious, arise from those influences and operations on the heart, which are *spiritual, divine, and supernatural*.

We find that those who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are in the New Testament called *spiritual* persons; and their being *spiritual* is spoken of as their peculiar character, and that wherein they are distinguished from those who are not sanctified.

Christians are called spiritual persons, because they are born of the Spirit, and because of the indwelling and holy influences of the Spirit of God in them; and things are called spiritual as related to the Spirit of God.¹⁴⁹

2. Truly gracious affections are attended with a conviction of the *reality and certainty* of divine things.¹⁵⁰

3. Gracious affections are attended with *evangelical humiliation*.¹⁵¹

5. Truly gracious affections differ from those that are false, in that they naturally beget and promote *such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness, and mercy, as appeared in Christ*.¹⁵²

6. Gracious Affections *soften the heart*, and are attended and followed with a *Christian tenderness* of spirit.¹⁵³

7. Those affections that are truly gracious differ from those that are false, is *beautiful symmetry and proportion*.¹⁵⁴

8. Another distinguishing difference between gracious affections, and others, is that *the higher they are raised, the more is the appetite and longing after spiritual attainments increased*.¹⁵⁵

Lastly. Gracious affections have *their exercise and fruit in Christian practice*.¹⁵⁶

Thus, gracious affections more or less equate to today's equivalent term of godly emotions, but with some loss of nuance, with the caveat that Wesley's eighteenth century definitions, immediately above, still remain valid today. Of particular significance is Wesley's claim that "Gracious Affections *soften the heart*," and thereby create a tender spirit within the recipient, item 6., above. The idea of softening one's heart, or making one's heart tender, falls clearly and unambiguously

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 37.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 40.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 43.

¹⁵² Ibid., 48. There is no point 4 identified as such.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 51.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 53.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 56.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

in the category of what we of the twenty-first-century would call emotion. Whether one uses Wesley's eighteenth-century expression of *gracious affection*, or its twenty-first-century equivalent of *godly emotion*, both meanings are exactly the same: one has an experience, which experience generates an emotion that acts as a spring that *can* produce action, or in more modern words an action tendency, which *can* result in affecting how one treats others, that is, with tenderness, or kindness, or love, or even with hardness of heart. The word *can* is used here to indicate that, in the twenty-first-century, one's *will* makes the final determination of any action that may be chosen.

Thus, the modern cognitive idea that emotion is an *action tendency* includes the concept that action is an option(s), which indicates that one has a choice to make: to act or not to act, that is the question¹⁵⁷ and one's *will*, or volition, is able to provide an answer. In Pharaoh's case, this ruler *willed* that *tenderness* would not govern his actions, and the biblical writer indicates that "he [Pharaoh] hardened his [own] heart."¹⁵⁸

Wesley states his ideas concerning one's will, with respect to one's affections, quite clearly in his abridgment of Edward's *Gracious Affections*:

The *Will* and the *Affections* are not two faculties; the latter not being essentially distinct from the former.

In every act of the will the soul either likes or dislikes; that liking, if it be in any high degree, is the same with *Love*; and that disliking, if in any great degree, the very same with *Hatred*. In every act of the Will *for* or *towards* something not present, the soul is in some degree inclined to that thing; and that inclination is the same with *Desire*.

Such seems to be our nature, that there never is any vigorous exercise of the Will, without some effect upon the body, in some alteration of the motion of its fluids, [7] especially of the animal spirits. And on the other hand, the constitution of the body, and the motion of its fluids, may promote the exercise of the Affections; but yet it is not the body, but the mind only, that is the proper seat of them.¹⁵⁹

The eighteenth-century Wesley, acting upon the best scientific information available to him, understood that the "*Will and the Affections*" were one and the same mental faculty. However, Edwards originally wrote this paragraph, which Wesley abridges, reproduced below, and it is interesting to compare the two:

¹⁵⁷ A play on words, taken from William Shakespeare, Hamlet's soliloquy, Act 3, Scene 1: "to be or not to be, that is the question."

¹⁵⁸ Cf., Exodus, chapters 8-14.

¹⁵⁹ Jonathan Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, 1801, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*, 6. Punctuation, spelling and italics are Wesley's.

The *Will* and the *Affections* of the Soul, are not two Faculties; the Affections are not essentially distinct from the Will, nor do they differ from the meer Actings of the Will and Inclination of the Soul, but only in the Liveliness and sensibleness [to sense something] of Exercise.

It must be confessed, that Language is here somewhat imperfect, and the Meaning of Words in a considerable Measure loose and unfixed, and not precisely limited by Custom, which governs the Use of Language. In some Sense, the Affection of the Soul differs nothing at all from the Will and Inclination, and the Will never is in any Exercise any further than it is *affected*; it is not moved out of a State of perfect Indifference, any otherwise than as it is *affected* one Way or other, and acts nothing voluntarily any further.¹⁶⁰

Wesley chose to eliminate Edwards' disclaimer, underlined above, that his [Edwards'] language is admittedly somewhat imprecise, an admission that Wesley would have done well to have included in his abridgment. Wesley does, in a way, include this proviso, but only in his monumental five-volume work *A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation: Or, A Compendium of Natural Philosophy*, item 10:

CHAP. IV.
Of the Soul, and of the Origin of Man.

- 7. For the External Senses.
- 9. The Understanding, Will, and Affections.
- 10. This may be so, or may not.

7. As to the senses, they suppose, that when the organs of sense are struck by any of the bodies that surround us, and the motion caused thereby continued through the nerves to the brain, the soul, residing there, is suitably affected : God having so closely connected the soul and the body, that on certain motions of the body, (if conveyed to the brain by means of the nerves) certain perceptions of the mind always follow : as, on the other hand, on certain perceptions of the mind, certain bodily motions follow.

9. Once more. They suppose there are two faculties in the soul; one that is passive, the Understanding, by which it perceives all the motions of the body, and knows and reflects on its own operations: 'the other active; the Will, by which we incline to good, and are averse to evil. The affections are only the Will exerting itself variously on various objects.

10. To speak freely upon the matter. I know the body of man is contrived with such exquisite wisdom, that he is able, by means of the organs of sense, to perceive outward objects; to continue those perceptions, to recall them after they are gone, and by a reflex act, to know what passes in his mind or body. But I know not how to account for any of these things.¹⁶¹

From a twenty-first-century viewpoint, cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists, together, have provided an excellent "account for... these things," and without their able assistance one would not be able to have the clear, unambiguous understanding for which Wesley so earnestly desired.

¹⁶⁰ Jonathan Edwards, 1746, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*, 5. Spelling and italics are Edwards', underlining is mine.

¹⁶¹ Op. cit., 1770, I:91-92; 1809, I:135-6. In Wesley's 1777 ed. the printer omitted this page, but nevertheless maintained continuous pagination. Underlining is mine.

In his abridgment, the eighteenth-century Wesley, acting upon the best information available to him, understands that the “*Will and the Affections*” are one and the same mental faculty. However, it is now understood that one’s will and one’s emotional systems are separate faculties that, indeed, do work together, but may, or may not, be in agreement. Affections, such as love or hate, provide the necessary motive force, and the will provides the decision that is needed in order to initiate action, or, by overriding that affectional force, choose inaction. This writer is confident that Wesley, who was always interested in true science, would have amended his viewpoint concerning the will and affections... if he had known about it.

In a citation of Wesley that is used on page twenty-six, above, Wesley seems to indicate that the will and the affections are not the same entity, as he describes the sinner’s nature before sanctification:

In a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed, all the inner man is full of sin, and here is no part that is good, *no not one*.¹⁶²

Above, Wesley describes the will as being “enthralled” (by evil), and where one’s affections are “disordered;” this somewhat contradictory statement seems to support the idea that the will and the affections are not necessarily identical, and this statement also reflects this writer’s position that one’s will is not identical to one’s emotions.

In the passage, below, Wesley contrasts the above several quotations concerning love with its emotional opposite, hatred. Note that hatred can be a gracious affection, or godly emotion, if its object is sin; for example, hatred of sin.

The contrary affection of hatred also, as having sin for its object, is spoken of as no inconsiderable part of Religion. It is spoken of as that by which true Religion may be distinguished: Prov. 8:13, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” And accordingly the saints are called upon to give evidence of their sincerity by this; Ps. 97:10, “Ye that love the Lord hate evil.”¹⁶³

¹⁶² John Wesley, 1752, ‘The Life of Mr. Isaac Ambrose,’ in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of The Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity, Which have been publish’d in the English Tongue*, Vol. 13, *Extracts from the Works of Isaac Ambrose, Sometime Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire, To Which is Prefix’d Some Account of His Life*, 52-53. Italics and capitals are Wesley’s.

¹⁶³ Jonathan Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, 1801, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*, 9. Punctuation, spelling and italics are Wesley’s, underlining is mine.

In other words, Wesley is saying, above, that affection also includes the following emotional concepts by today's standards: hatred, and hating evil, "Ye that love the Lord hate evil."

All of these verbs for emotion represent action words, words that become "spring[s] of [human] actions," as Wesley says, or, in twenty-first-century parlance, cognitively recognized emotions whose purpose is to provide incentive for action.

So holy desire exercised in hungerings and thirstings after God and holiness, is mentioned as one of those great things which denotes a man truly blessed, Matt. 5:6, "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." So holy joy, as an important part of Religion, is often pressed, with great earnestness: And it is mentioned among the principal fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22.¹⁶⁴

Wesley, above, exhorts his people to have "hungerings and thirstings," which are biblical metaphors conveying the twenty-first century idea of an emotion of *fervent desire* for God and for his holiness.¹⁶⁵ Experiencing the modern emotion of "holy joy" comes as a byproduct of such hungering and thirsting for God and for holiness. Here, motive becomes all-important; the direct goal or object of one's hungering and thirsting is to experience God, and to become holy through this experience, rather than merely to receive joy; Wesley says that as a result of this type of experience one can then also experience great and sustainable joy that is impossible to fully describe in words.

Religious sorrow, mourning, and brokenness of heart are also frequently spoken of as a great part of Religion. Again, the holy Scriptures frequently speak of *compassion*, or *mercy*, as an essential thing, insomuch that a merciful man and a good man are equivalent terms in the Bible. Zeal is also spoken of as an essential part of Religion. It is spoken of as a great thing Christ had in view, in giving himself for our redemption; Tit. 2:14, "Who gave himself for us, that he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And this is spoken of as the great thing wanting in the luke-warm Laodiceans, Rev. 3:15, 16, 19.

They then who would deny that much of true Religion lies in the Affections, must throw away the Bible, and get some other rule by which to judge of the nature of Religion.¹⁶⁶

Here, above, Wesley encourages nurturing affections (emotions) such as sorrow, mourning, and the feeling of spiritual brokenness, which is an integral part of his understanding of the reconciliation between God and humanity or between people: we of the twenty-first century would deem these words to be descriptors of

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Cf., Mt. 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

¹⁶⁶ Jonathan Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, 1801, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*. Italics, spelling and punctuation are Wesley's, 8-9.

emotions. Wesley, here, says that compassion, mercy, and zeal are essential in the Christian life, and he contrasts these concepts with the luke-warm zeal expressed by the Laodiceans.

True zeal, for Wesley, becomes an extremely powerful emotional engine that can move a Christian to sacrifice, and even die, for others and for God; Laodicean zeal, on the other hand, has little motivating power because that type of desire lacks intensity and sincerity.¹⁶⁷

Wesley defines zeal:

- I. And first, what is the nature of zeal in general, and of true Christian zeal in particular?
 1. The original word, in its primary signification, means *heat*, such as the heat of boiling water. When it is figuratively applied to the mind it means any warm emotion or affection.¹⁶⁸

For Wesley, zeal can be a gracious affection, that is, a godly emotion. Indeed, Wesley says:

For it is a certain truth (although little understood in the world) that Christian zeal is all love. It is nothing else. The love of God and man fills up its whole nature.¹⁶⁹

What Wesley is saying in, today's language, is that *Christian* zeal is an emotion whose impetus is love; indeed, for Wesley, zeal and love seem to become one and the same. In today's language, the word love is used by Wesley as an affective, or emotional, word empowering the spirit-filled Christian for service to God.

John Wesley's Second 20th Century Insight

In another passage, found in Wesley's sermon 116, *What is Man? Psalm 8:4*, he poses the following statement concerning his ability to think and feel, to reflect and reason, and also feel and to possess inward emotions:

5. I find something in me that *thinks*... something which see, and hears, and smells, and tastes, and feels, all which are so many modes of thinking. It goes farther: having perceived objects by any of these senses it forms inward ideas of them. It *judges* concerning them; it sees whether they agree or disagree with each other. It *reasons* concerning them; that is, infers one proposition from another. It *reflects* upon its own operations. It is endued with imagination and memory. And any of its operations, judgment in particular, may be subdivided into many others.
 6. ... From this I learn that this thinking principle is not lodged in my hands, or feet, or legs, or arms. It is not lodged in the trunk of my body. Anyone may be assured of this by a little reflection. I cannot conceive that it is situated in my bones, or in any part of my flesh. So far

¹⁶⁷ Cf., John Wesley's Sermon 92, *On Zeal*, BCE 3:308-321.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. 311. Italics are Wesley's.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 312. Parentheses are Wesley's.

[as] I can judge, it seems to be situated in some part of my head. But whether in the pineal gland, or in any part of the brain, I am not able to determine.

7. But farther. This inward principle, wherever it is lodged, is capable not only of thinking, but likewise of love, hatred, joy, sorrow, desire, fear, hope, etc., and a whole train of other inward emotions which are commonly called 'passions' or 'affections'. They are styled, by a general appellation, 'the will', and are mixed and diversified a thousand ways. And they seem to be the only spring of action in that inward principle I call 'the soul'.¹⁷⁰

The above quotation provides an example of Wesley's forays into speculative theology that is intuitively derived from his own personal reflection. The length of this citation is needed in order that one may consider the context of his words. In his introduction to this sermon (Sermon 116, BCE), Outler reminds the reader of Wesley's "third-generation Cartesianism"¹⁷¹ from which source Wesley developed his ideas concerning this subject, and as evidenced, for instance, by his referral to the pineal gland as the possible organ where thinking takes place. More importantly, here, Wesley presents his ideas concerning his ability to think, that is, a "thinking principle... an inward thinking principle"... that is also capable of experiencing "love, hatred, joy, sorrow, desire, fear, hope, etc., and a whole train of other inward emotions which are commonly called 'passions' or 'affections.'"

It is remarkable that Wesley would use the words "inward emotions," because the idea that "inward emotions which are commonly called 'passions' or 'affections'." would not be developed until the latter half of the twentieth-century. In chapter three, thanks to the work of the twentieth-century neurosurgeon-scientist and medical doctor, Antonio Damasio, it will be established that feelings and emotions are two sides of the same coin: that is, the term *feelings* refers to internalized emotions, and the term *emotions* relates to externalized emotions.

Even more remarkable is the fact that, here, Wesley seems to be equating the term *inwards emotions* with the terms *passions or affections*, thus further strengthening the connection between eighteenth-century passions and affections with the twentieth-century conception of emotions.

Wesley makes many references to inner, or inward, emotions throughout his writings. A sampling of which follows:

¹⁷⁰ Op. cit., BCE 4:22.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., BCE 4:19.

There is, secondly, required (which how few have attained!) a true knowledge of ourselves; a knowledge both of our hearts and lives, of our inward tempers [moods or attitudes] and outward conversation [behavior]. SERMON 12: *The Witness of Our Own Spirit*.¹⁷²

'A parcel of hot-brained enthusiasts, gaping after they know not what, not content with rational religion, but running mad after raptures and inward feelings'; [speaking of the world's opinion of why they persecute Christians]. SERMON 23: *Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount*.¹⁷³

And even peacemaking (or doing good) and suffering for righteousness' sake, stand entitled to the blessings annexed to them only as they imply these inward dispositions, as they spring from, exercise, and confirm them. So that whereas the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees was external only, it may be said in some sense that the righteousness of a Christian is internal only—all his actions and sufferings being as nothing in themselves, being estimated before God only by the tempers [moods or attitudes] from which they spring. SERMON 25: *Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount*.¹⁷⁴

When men feel in themselves the heavy burden of sin, see damnation to be the reward of it, and behold with the eye of their mind the horror of hell, they tremble, they quake, and are inwardly touched with sorrowfulness of heart, and cannot but accuse themselves, and open their grief unto Almighty God, and call unto him for mercy. SERMON 27: *Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount*.¹⁷⁵

Who then can conceive, much less describe, the strong emotion, the secret workings of soul, which a parent feels on such an occasion? SERMON 136: *On Mourning For The Dead*.¹⁷⁶

Every word, including the word affection, or affections, is context dependent when one tries to determine its absolute meaning. Thus, from the context provided by the above lengthy quotes, it can be seen that these two eighteenth-century words can be translated for twenty-first century readers, generally, as emotions, but with the understanding that all nuance is dropped.

What does the eighteenth-century Wesley understand about the word affections that we twenty-first century readers have lost? Here is what he has to say:

The Affections and Passions are frequently spoken of as the same; and yet there is some difference; *Affection* is a word, that in its ordinary signification, is more extensive than *Passion*, being used for all vigorous actings of the Will; but *Passion* for those that are more sudden, and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and by which the mind is less in its own command.¹⁷⁷

In other words, eighteenth-century affections and passions may be equivalent to twenty-first-century emotions, but, in making this equivalency, important nuances

¹⁷² BCE 1:304. Parentheses Wesley's.

¹⁷³ BCE 1:522.

¹⁷⁴ BCE 1:568. Parentheses Wesley's.

¹⁷⁵ BCE 1:599.

¹⁷⁶ BCE 4:242.

¹⁷⁷ Jonathan Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, 1801, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections, In Three Parts*, 7.

are lost, such as the idea that affections deal with our higher nature; passions with our lower, or baser, nature, that is, in Wesley's parlance, our "animal spirits." A cognitive understanding of emotion is vital¹⁷⁸ if one is to understand Wesley, because Wesley teaches, for instance, that it is God's command that "we love one another" and that we shall "continue in brotherly love."¹⁷⁹

But, how can one *control* one's emotions to, say, decrease or eliminate ungodly emotions or, conversely, to increase godly ones? Wesley instructs that "we" should quench "those passions" that have been "inflamed" by attending, for instance, evil diversions.¹⁸⁰ The answer is simple, yet profound. One asks God to take away one's sinful desires and replace them with godly desires: a simple solution in theory, but usually difficult to accomplish in practice. Briefly, one can, indeed, control one's emotions.

It has been demonstrated, above, that Wesley has, loosely speaking, a cognitive-emotional perspective, but, the point here is that without a cognitive view of emotion these commands, for instance, to love one another, would be meaningless, because the non-cognitive position on emotion holds that emotions *cannot* be commanded.¹⁸¹

Additionally, Elliott, who maintains a cognitive-emotional perspective, points out that

the origin of the ideas expressed in the words cognitive and non-cognitive are ancient. The words themselves give us modern terminology we can use to frame debate. Virtually all the major thinkers in ancient Greek philosophy, plays, and poetry recognized and wrote about emotion from one of these standpoints.¹⁸²

Elliott says that over the past several centuries many theologians have recognized this non-cognitive stance with regard to emotion, and have solved the resulting conundrum by teaching that love, for instance, is *not* an emotion and, therefore, *can* be commanded.¹⁸³ Fortunately, Wesley was not of that number.

¹⁷⁸ Elliott exhaustively emphasizes this aspect, *Faithful Feelings*, ch. 1-3, but particularly in ch. 1, where he provides an excellent review of several major theories of emotion, and where he argues strenuously for the cognitive viewpoint, 16-55.

¹⁷⁹ E.g., Ser. 75: 'On Schism,' BCE 3:64-65.

¹⁸⁰ Ser. 143, 'Public Diversions Denounced,' BCE 4:326. Words enclosed by quotation marks are Wesley's.

¹⁸¹ Elliott provides a full, comprehensive discussion concerning the commanding of emotion, in *Faithful Feelings*, 141-144.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, Elliott succinctly sums up the non-cognitive approach to commanding emotion: "In a non-cognitive approach, emotion cannot be evaluated; one emotion cannot be said to be more appropriate

One of the first modern philosophers to take this approach is Kant (1724-1804).

He writes:

It is in this manner, undoubtedly, that we are to understand those passages of Scripture also in which we are commanded to love our neighbour, even our enemy. For love, as an affection [i.e., 21st c., emotion], cannot be commanded, but beneficence for duty's sake may; even though we are not impelled to it by any inclination—nay, are even repelled by a natural and unconquerable aversion. This is practical love, and not pathological—a love which is seated in the will, and not in the propensions of sense—in principles of action and not of tender sympathy; and it is this love alone which can be commanded.¹⁸⁴

Within each of these two broad divisions lay innumerable subdivisions that have developed over time. Generally, cognitivists believe that some type of cognitive processing is required in order for an emotion, an action tendency, to be generated. The purpose of the discussion, here, is to introduce the subject and the concept, and to acknowledge other viewpoints. It is of great significance, particularly with regard to theology, that only the various cognitive theories can accommodate the idea of God commanding us to have, or not have, particular emotions, and why one is, therefore, responsible for one's emotions.

The Consequence of Using Theological Definitions

Perhaps the most important word in the Bible, and for Wesley in his theology, and in this thesis, is love. Is love really an emotion... or not? What is the definition of love? How does one go about making a definition of love? Some theologians, for theological reasons only, claim love is not an emotion, and if true, then any discussion of love in this thesis becomes superfluous! Therefore, these issues surrounding the word love must be dealt with.

There are a number of hazards that can beset even *experts* who attempt to interpret an emotion, such as love, in theological works. Elliott emphasizes two classes of error in particular: errors when interpreting emotional words or vocabulary that then naturally lead to exegetical errors stemming from a faulty understanding of emotion.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, significant errors can occur when defining emotional words when a special *theological* meaning is intended rather than relying upon lexicography to provide the basic definition, or by making a distinction

than another. If emotion is a sensation in the body (nervous system), no emotion can be, according to Lyons, 'unreasonable, unjustified or inappropriate,' "28, parenthesis is Elliott's.

¹⁸⁴ Immanuel Kant, tr. by Thomas Kingsmill Abbott (1829-1913), 1898, *Kant's Critique of Practical Reason, and other Works on the Theory of Ethics*, 5th ed. rev., pp. 15-16. Brackets are mine.

¹⁸⁵ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful Feelings*, 125.

between spiritual and secular definitions of a word.¹⁸⁶ Thus, a solid philosophical understanding of emotion and emotional terms must precede any analysis of the specific roles of emotion within a work, including the writings of Wesley.¹⁸⁷ Therefore, this original analysis of a definition of love, including discussion of some of the biblical Greek words translated as love as developed by a representative Wesleyan writer who uses theological definitions, is clearly mandated.

In the introduction to this chapter, it is pointed out that most theological writers fail even to define the key emotional terms that they use, and when they do provide definitions those definitions often beg the question. Elliott makes a significant, and pertinent, observation here with regard to emotional vocabulary in general, that “the specific meaning of the vocabulary of emotion is not equivalent to analyzing emotion in a passage.” In other words, the lexical meaning of a word cannot be ignored. He argues that “misunderstanding of the nature of emotion” amplifies this mistake when interpreting emotional vocabulary. He says, furthermore, that some emotional terms may be “defined as non-emotional,” when they are, in fact, emotional.¹⁸⁸

Barr says that, in addition to a “purely lexicographical” meaning, “syntactical relations” and the “grouping of words” are important factors in determining the meaning of a particular word. In other words, lexicography determines the general meaning of a word, while grammar and context develop precise meanings.¹⁸⁹

Elliott concludes:

It is my contention that many New Testament scholars have taken their theology and defined emotion words by drawing on these [theological] beliefs. In other words, emotional vocabulary has often been redefined to mean a theological concept *devoid of its emotional meaning*. This method is the wrong way around; the cart is before the horse! Instead, we must understand the emotion word and then see where emotion fits into the theology of the passage.¹⁹⁰

This last sentence in Elliott’s quote exactly describes the plan of action for this thesis.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 126-129.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 125-126; 165.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 127-128.

¹⁸⁹ James Barr, 1961, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 222.

¹⁹⁰ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful Feelings*, 128. Italics are mine.

An Example of Theological Lexicography

The most egregious examples of using “theological lexicography”¹⁹¹ involve the Greek verbs and nouns ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω (φιλία is used only once, James 4:4), which all have the general meaning of *love*. *Love* is the most important emotion in the Bible for the reasons the Apostle Paul records in the thirteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. The role of *love* in Wesley’s theology will be found to be the most important role in his writings, and therefore the background and context attached to this word becomes of paramount importance if a correct understanding is to be reached.

For instance, Oord, in his book, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, uses theological lexicography to produce a single definition for the otherwise polysemous,¹⁹² emotional word *love*. One problem generated by this conflation is to reduce a word with multiple, related meanings down to a word of only one meaning, because this reduction necessarily results in a significant loss of overall understanding or meaning. Oord writes,

Given the diversity of meanings for love in society, reclaiming the centrality of love in theology requires defining love carefully and from a biblically oriented perspective. A strong definition will be in conversation with other disciplines and sources of knowledge, of course. But general biblical principles and meanings will govern.

All love—properly defined—is holy, because “love comes from God” (1 Jn. 4:8).¹⁹³

I define *agape* as *acting intentionally, in response to God and others, to promote overall well-being in response to that which produces ill-being*. To say it the way Jesus, Paul, and Peter might, *agape* repays evil with good (Lk. 6:27–31, Rom. 12:21, 1 Thess. 5:15, 1 Pet. 3:9).¹⁹⁴

To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic/empathetic response to God and others, to promote overall well-being.¹⁹⁵

Here, Oord discards semantic principles because his definition of love comes solely from his biblical theology. In Elliott’s words, the cart is now before the horse. Second, while Oord’s goal may be admirable, it is not likely that merely redefining and conflating the word *love* will really “reclaim the centrality of love in theology.”

¹⁹¹ Moisés Silva, 1994, 2nd ed., *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*. Silva writes an excellent section, entitled “Theological Lexicography,” that points out the ensuing errors generated by this method of using a special theological meaning to define a biblical word, 22–28.

¹⁹² A word or phrase that contains two more meanings.

¹⁹³ Thomas Oord, 2010, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, 9. Quotation marks and parentheses are Oord’s.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 56. Italics are Oord’s.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 17.

In order to accomplish that task, love, in all its many-splendored beauty, would have to be fully integrated into theology, *with* all of its nuances still attached.

Third, he misapplies a scriptural truth. As he says, love does, indeed, come from God. But so does everything else. Earlier it was noted that “Wesley teaches the universal, or total, depravity of fallen human nature, and that through the Fall all aspects of human nature, including our emotions, are tainted by sin.”¹⁹⁶ Therefore, even one’s emotions, all of one’s emotions, including the multifaceted emotion called *love*, also is in need of redemption, as Wesley clearly understood. Just as other things which come from God have been misused, love, also, has been perverted.

Oord is aware of at least one of these biblical passages referencing love that is perverted, but he renames this use of the word love as “false *agape*,” thus effectively denying that love could be biblically used in a perverted way.¹⁹⁷ Substituting “false *agape*,” or false love, for the word love found in the following passages could lead to undesirable results. The meaning in many of these verses, illustrated below, would be reversed: He that “falsely” loveth his life shall lose it (John 12:25)! In the Greek version of the New Testament, there is no justification for inserting the word *falsely* into the text.

Matthew 5:46 For if ye love [ἀγαπάω] them which love [ἀγαπάω] you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Matthew 10:37 He that loveth [φιλέω] father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth [φιλέω] son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love [φιλέω] to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

Matthew 23:2 The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: ⁶ And love [φιλέω] the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷ And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. [Also in Mark 12:38-40; Luke 11:43, Luke 20:46]

Luke 6:32 For if ye love [ἀγαπάω] them which love [ἀγαπάω] you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love [ἀγαπάω] those that love [ἀγαπάω] them.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved [ἀγαπάω] darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 12:43 For they [Pharisees] loved [ἀγαπάω] the praise of men more than the praise of God.

¹⁹⁶ See this thesis, 25: JW, e.g., Ser. 74: ‘Of The Church,’ BCE 3:53.

¹⁹⁷ Thomas Oord, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, 46.

John 12:25 He that loveth [φιλέω] his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved [ἀγαπάω] this present world,

1 John 2:15 Love [ἀγαπάω] not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love [ἀγαπάω] the world, the love [ἀγάπη] of the Father is not in him.

2 Peter 2:15 ...following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved [ἀγαπάω] the wages of unrighteousness;

Revelation 22:15 For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth [φιλέω] and maketh a lie.¹⁹⁸

The sheer number, and importance, of these references preclude the option of ignoring the perverted side of love when defining *love*. As in non-biblical applications, it can be seen here that from a biblical perspective the object loved can include people; or things such as the world system, a lie, the wages of unrighteousness, one's life, darkness (sin and evil), praise, the best seats, and honor.

It is abundantly clear that throughout the course of human history, every human emotion has been perverted, including love. There is such a thing as holy love, or gracious affections, but love can also become perverted, that is, love can be expended on wrong objects for the wrong reasons. Therefore, it is a faulty conclusion to say that “love—properly defined—is holy,” meaning love is *only* holy because “love comes from God.” The Bible includes many examples of people who do love in a *perverted* way. It is the grammar and context surrounding the word *love* that determines the use, but not the definition, of the word *love*. The *definition* of love must be lexically determined. *How* the word love is used, whether in the Bible or in a secular application, is determined by the grammar and context in which the word *love* is embedded.

How does Wesley define *love*? He published three dictionaries in his lifetime,¹⁹⁹ and writes in his short preface to all three editions:

I purposely omit [all words] which are not *hard*, and which are not found in the best writers: not only all law-words and most technical terms, but likewise all, the meaning of which may be easily gathered from those of the same derivation.

And, he appends to the preface of the second and third editions this note:

¹⁹⁸ BibleWorks, Version 6.0.012Z, Authorized Version.
¹⁹⁹ In 1753, 1764, 1777.

In this Edition I have added some hundreds of words, which were omitted in the former: chiefly from Mr. Johnson's dictionary, which I carefully looked over for that purpose.

It is interesting to note that Wesley omits the word *love* in all of his editions. His careful inspection of, and fondness for, Samuel Johnson's dictionary suggests that Johnson's definition of this very common word is acceptable to him.

Johnson lists five lexical definitions for the verb "to love," and thirteen definitions for the noun "love." It can now be seen that the lexicon (dictionary) provides the general meaning of this polysemous word, *love*; the context and grammar determine which precise meaning should be applied. In every case Johnson's definitions make sense when properly applied to the English Bible translation of the various Greek and Hebrew words rendered into the English word *love*.

To LOVE, v. a.[Lucian, Saxon.]

1. To regard with passionate affection, as that of one sex to another.
2. To regard, with the affection of a friend.
3. To regard with parental tenderness.
4. To be pleased with; delight in.
5. To regard with reverent unwillingness to offend. *Love thy God with all thine heart. Deut. Vi. 5.*

Love. N. s. [from the verb.]

1. The passion between the sexes.
2. Kindness; good-will; friendship.
3. Courtship.
4. Tenderness; parental care.
5. Liking; inclination to: as, the *love* of one's country.
6. Object beloved. Open the temple gates unto my *love*. Spenser.
7. Lewdness. He is not lolling on a lewd *love* bed, But on his knees at meditation. Shakespeare.
8. Unreasonable liking. The *love* to sin makes a man sin against his own reason. Taylor.
9. Fondness; concord. Come, *love* and health to all! Shakespeare.
10. Principle of union. *Love* is the great instrument of nature, the bond and cement of society, the spirit and spring of the universe: *love* is such an affection as cannot so properly be said to be in the soul, as the soul to be in that: it is the whole man wrapt up into one desire. South.
11. Picturesque representation of love. The lovely babe was born with ev'ry grace: Such was his form as painters, when they show / Their utmost art, on naked *loves* bestow. Dryden.
12. A word of endearment. 'Tis no dishonor, trust me, *love*, 'tis none; I would die for thee. Dryden's Don Sebastian.
13. Due reverence to God. I know you have not the *love* of God in you. John.

Love is of two sorts, of friendship and of desire; the one betwixt friends, the other betwixt lovers; the one a rational, the other a sensitive love: so our *love* of God consists of two parts, as esteeming of God, and desiring of him. Hammond.

The *love* of God makes a man chaste without the laborious arts of fasting, and exterior disciplines; he reaches at glory without any other arms but those of *love*.
Taylor.²⁰⁰

But, is love really an emotion? Please consider all of the emotion words found throughout Johnson's lengthy definition. If it is, then desire or attraction, passion or affection, in some form will certainly be included in each individual definition of love. Indeed, examination of Johnson's eighteen definitions validates this statement, but Oord would disagree.

We best define love as promoting overall well-being, not desire as such.²⁰¹
Fondness and affection should not be defined as love.²⁰²

Oord strips the word *love* of its emotional connotation when he says:

We should not define love simply as emotion or identify it as one particular emotion. But we should accept that emotions play some role—sometimes maximal, sometimes minimal—in the sympathy/empathy love requires.²⁰³

In other words, Oord is saying that love, itself, is not an emotion, a faulty conclusion necessitated by his use of theological lexicography. Oord avers that emotion is attached to love through "sympathy/empathy," a compound term that he does consider to be an emotion. A review of Johnson's eighteen definitions of *love* establishes that Johnson certainly understood that love is, to use a twentieth-century word that was not available to Johnson, an emotion. Even reverence, especially reverence due to God, is accompanied by *strong* emotion, and that emotion is best described as *love*. And the strongest love for God occurs when one finally realizes that God actually loves them *as an individual person*; God loves *me*! In describing his Aldersgate experience, Wesley emphasizes the words *my*, *mine*, and *me*, by using italics to stress this personal aspect of his Aldersgate experience. Wesley's love for God, generated through his experience, powered him for the next fifty three years. Very powerful, indeed!²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ Samuel Johnson, 1756, Vol. 2, *A Dictionary of the English Language: in Which the Words are deduced from their Originals, Explained in their different Meanings, and Authorized by the Names of the writers in whose Works they are found. Abstracted from the Folio Edition, by the Author Samuel Johnson, A.M. To which is prefixed, a Grammar of the English Language.* Italics, Brackets, and uppercase fonts are Johnson's.

²⁰¹ Thomas Oord, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, 80.

²⁰² Ibid., 25.

²⁰³ Ibid., 24.

²⁰⁴ See Wesley's Journal for May 24, 1738, item 14, BCE 18:249-250.

Oord conflates sympathy and empathy, two distinct terms that have an important difference, even as he cites an excellent journal article that emphasizes and clarifies this difference.

I include the two terms “sympathy” and “empathy” in my definition to identify the affective, emotional, or feeling aspect of love. Scholars contest the precise meanings of *sympathy* and *empathy*. Philosophers typically mean by “sympathy” that a person “feels with” others. Psychologists and sociologists typically mean by “empathy” the same thing.⁵⁸ I use these words to remind us that a real relational bond exists between lover and others.

Oord's Footnote 58

L. G. Wispé also offers a fine article on the issue of the uses of sympathy and empathy, “The Distinction between Sympathy and Empathy,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50 (1986).²⁰⁵

Oord footnotes a reference to a truly fine article, below, that he fails to actually utilize, and also ignores Wispé's warning against obfuscating the distinction between sympathy and empathy:

Sympathy refers to the heightened awareness of another's plight as something to be alleviated. Empathy refers to the attempt of one [sic] self-aware self to understand the subjective experiences of another self. Sympathy is a way of relating. Empathy is a way of knowing. I suggest that these are different psychological processes and that the differences between them should not be obfuscated.²⁰⁶

Massey, speaking for the psychologists, also gives an excellent definition of empathy.

Empathy is “the ability to identify with and experience another person's experiences. This is accomplished by (as much as possible) suspending one's own frame of reference in order to enter the perceptual and emotional world of the other.”²⁰⁷

Ezhanikatt, Hand, and Skwerer say that empathy is *feeling with*, while sympathy is *feeling for*, another. Empathy generates a closer bond than sympathy because, with empathy, one suspends one's own feelings and thoughts in order to gain access to another person's world and experience,²⁰⁸ that is, to *feel with* that person.

Patton reframes Wispé:

²⁰⁵ Thomas Oord, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, 22. Quotation marks and italics are Oord's.

²⁰⁶ Lauren Wispé, 1986, ‘The Distinction Between Sympathy and Empathy: To Call Forth a Concept, A Word Is Needed,’ in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50-2:314. Brackets are mine.

²⁰⁷ Massey, D. E., 2005, ‘Empathy,’ in *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, 354. Parenthesis is Massey's.

²⁰⁸ Ezhanikatt, Hand, and Skwerer, ‘Compassion,’ in *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, p. 206.

Empathy combines cognitive understanding with affective connection, and in that sense differs from sympathy, which is primarily emotional (Wispé, 1976).²⁰⁹

Patton's language provides additional important clarity in discerning the difference between empathy and sympathy, in that empathy requires much more cognition than does sympathy.

In the perverted usages of love recorded in the Bible, neither sympathy nor empathy plays much of a role. Yet, the emotional energy behind such types of love is certainly strong, often exceedingly strong, such as the love of the Scribes and the Pharisees for preeminence. Sympathy and empathy are both in play through the various characters that encounter the victim in the story of the Good Samaritan.²¹⁰ The priest and the Levite may have felt sympathy for the victim, but only the Samaritan felt empathy. Sympathy leads to acknowledgment, while empathy leads to action. However, it is doubtful whether sympathy/empathy plays a part in one's love for God, because these terms are usually reserved for those perceived to be in need.

Another Example of Theological Lexicography

Various popular authorities have misdefined three biblical Greek words that are translated as *love* by using the technique of theological lexicography, mistranslations that could adversely affect aspects of this thesis - if they were true. Butler has written an excellent book entitled *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*. Although it was written in 1977, it remains an indispensable study aid because he exhaustively traces out the extent of another serious error involving theological lexicography. As will be demonstrated, he notes that it is commonly accepted that ἀγαπάω depicts spiritual or divine love, while φιλέω designates brotherly or affectionate love. He proves that there is a great deal of disparity among authorities concerning the translation of these words, and also notes that even "many a scholar from one page to another disagrees with himself."²¹¹

To summarize Butler's findings concerning the sources of these errors he cites a number of authorities.²¹² Coates' *Bible Key Words*, an English translation derived

²⁰⁹ Michael Quinn Patton, 2002, *Qualitative Research & Evaluative Methods*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 52. Wispé's article is referenced in footnote 129, above.

²¹⁰ Luke 10:30-36

²¹¹ Roy F. Butler, 1977, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 9.

²¹² All of the subsequent references to the various authorities, below, are from Butler, down to footnote 138. In this section discussing the authorities cited in Butler, I have retained Butler's transliteration of the four Greek words for love.

from Kittel's German work,²¹³ defines *phileo* as "liking or caring," a love "from which a man can excuse himself, not an irresistible urge or frenzy."²¹⁴ *Agapao* is defined as "used of God's special love for an individual."²¹⁵ "*Agape* is especially seen in God's love, the love of one on high."²¹⁶ In this same work, *agapao* is defined as "colourless and indefinite. The verb often means no more than to be content with something," a contradiction, indeed, when compared to the noun form just described.²¹⁷

*Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*²¹⁸ defines the words *agape* and *agapao* as "the deeper sense of spiritual affection, the love that links God and man and unites soul and soul in divine communion."²¹⁹ Hastings continues, on the same page, to say that "in the New Testament vocabulary of love... *agape* and *philia* are the prevailing synonyms," as are the "verbs *agapao* and *phileo*."²²⁰

The *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* defines "*agapao* and *agape* as the characteristic word of Christianity, and since the Spirit of revelation has used it to express ideas previously unknown, enquiry into its use... throws but little light upon its distinctive meaning in the NT."²²¹

Young's *Analytical Concordance* defines "*agapao* as to love, *phileo* as to be a friend."²²²

Richardson's *Theological Wordbook of the Bible* makes the claim that "*agapao* and *agape* are described as the most frequent words for *love* in the New Testament, with *phileo* used occasionally as a synonym."²²³

Moulton and Milligan produced *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, wherein "a distinction is made, under the word *agapao*, between the two verbs for love" (*agapao* and *phileo*). "In the NT *agapan* [transliteration of ἀγαπᾶν ~ *agapao*] is

²¹³ John Rider Coates, Gerhard Kittel, 1951, *Bible key words: from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.

²¹⁴ Roy F. Butler, 1977, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 10.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 10-11.

²¹⁸ James Hastings, Ed., 1952, *Love*, in "A Dictionary of the Bible."

²¹⁹ Roy F. Butler, 1977, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 11; in Hastings, 555.

²²⁰ Ibid., 11; in Hastings, 555.

²²¹ W. E. Vine, 1940, 'Love,' in *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 11.

²²² Robert Young, 1936, 'Love,' in *Analytic Concordance to the Bible*. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 11.

²²³ Alan Richardson, Ed., 1953, 'Love,' in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, 133-134. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 12.

purged of all coldness and is deeper than *philein* [phileo] though the latter remains more human... It is extremely hard to reconcile ourselves to a meaningless use of synonyms.”²²⁴

Trench sees a difference between *agapao* and *phileo* that he equates with the Latin words *diligo* and *amo*, words roughly translated as love, but with a distinction between them. Butler’s point here is not found in the actual meaning of these two Latin words, but in the fact that Trench says that “*agapao* and *phileo* [do] differ in meaning,” just as these two Latin words differ in meaning.²²⁵ Trench fails to delineate that difference.

Souther’s *Lexicon* says that “*agapao* is used ‘nearly always of the love of God or Christ to us, and of our love to Him and to our fellow creatures, as inspired by His love for us.’ The word *phileo* is used ‘of friendship’ (contrast *agapao*, of reverential love).”²²⁶

Arndt and Gingrich write that “*agapao* and *phileo* seem to be used interchangeably here, and here *phileo* seems to be equivalent to *agapao*.”²²⁷ “Here” refers to John 21:15-17.²²⁸ Dongell, when referring to this same passage, takes the same stance that both of the verbs used “here” are “synonyms” employed “to avoid a distracting repetition of the same term.”²²⁹

The above is only a synopsis of Butler’s painstaking and thorough research. Butler’s solution to the problem concerning the meaning of ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω involves virtually the same method that this writer used, more than forty years ago, when he first faced this same dilemma concerning the meanings of the various Greek words translated as *love*. The importance of arriving at a right conclusion concerning the emotion called love can hardly be overstated, both for the purpose of writing this thesis and also for living a Christian life of holiness. Butler understands that the definition of any word is “derived from the actual use of the word.”²³⁰ His

²²⁴ James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, 1949, ‘Agapao,’ in *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 2. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 12.

²²⁵ Richard Chevenix Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, 41. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 12.

²²⁶ Alexander Souter, 1925, ‘Agapao, Phileo,’ in *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*. Parenthesis is Souter’s. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 12.

²²⁷ W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, ‘Agapao,’ in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 12.

²²⁸ From Butler’s footnote 19, 78.

²²⁹ Joseph Dongell, 1997, *John, A Bible Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*, 248.

²³⁰ Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 16.

thinking is roughly the same as this author's position forty years ago: we both examined every New Testament occurrence of the various Greek words translated as love. Butler narrowed his focus to the two verbs, *agapao* and *phileo*. This writer found twelve Greek words, and narrowed them down to three words: ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω. Butler's system was a bit more formal than this writer's, because he set up four logical principles to be used to evaluate and compare his two words; this author looked for patterns of usage.

Solutions to this Dilemma

Butler reaches two conclusions. His solution is that *agapao* and *phileo* are synonyms and therefore have identical in meaning.²³¹ He provides a criterion for those who might think these words are not identical in meaning.

Those who maintain that the meanings of the two verbs are (that is, must be) different, can prove their position only by showing that every occurrence of *agapao* has a meaning different from every occurrence of *phileo*.²³²

His second conclusion is that the verbs *agapao* and *phileo* both mean *love*.

At the stage of Greek which the New Testament represents, *agapao* had become the more common of the two; but *phileo* still might be used at will to convey the same idea and to describe the same kind of love as *agapao*. At that time, as we have seen, both words meant not only a *divine* and *spiritual* love, not only an *affectionate* and *brotherly* love, but a *love of any kind whatever*. In this respect both words correspond exactly to the English word *love*.²³³

In a footnote appended to the above paragraph, Butler deals with the nouns, *agape* and *philia*. He writes:

In this discussion I have confined myself to the two verbs for *love*. I do not doubt, however, that the two nouns for *love*, *agape* and *philia*, have the same meanings, just as the verbs do. But, since *philia* occurs only one time in the New Testament (*agape* about 120 times), there is insufficient evidence for real proof either of similarity or of dissimilarity of meaning.²³⁴

Two fallacies are involved in this discussion. The first fallacy involves many of the authorities that have been cited who think that ἀγάπη, for instance, should be defined as some form of divine love. This is a definition obtained only from theology and the Bible, and this practice is called theological lexicography, and necessarily leads to a faulty understanding of these terms.

²³¹ Ibid., 70-72.

²³² Ibid., 17.

²³³ Ibid., 72.

²³⁴ Ibid., 86. Italics and Parentheses are Butler's.

A second way this fallacy can be seen is by the fact that a considerable number of biblical passages use these same Greek words, but in a pejorative manner that contradicts the alleged biblical meaning of divine love. Two passages can illustrate this point.

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved [ἀγαπάω] this present world,

1 John 2:15 Love [ἀγαπάω] not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love [ἀγαπάω] the world, the love [ἀγάπη] of the Father is not in him.²³⁵

Demas certainly did not have a divine or godly love for this world, and this definition does not make sense when the context of the passage is considered. The second passage does not make sense, as well, when the theological definition *divine love* is applied.

The second fallacy involves Butler,²³⁶ as well as this writer forty years ago. We each opened our inquiry into the meaning of these Greek words by exhaustively examining the biblical meanings (definitions), as well as the usage, of these words as found in the Bible, but without consulting any secular lexical sources. This practice is called theological lexicography, and if we had continued we would have created biblical meanings for these words that would necessarily be different from the normal, secular definitions because we were using only a theological source. Fortunately, we each independently accepted a general, lexical definition for love suitable to both religious and secular needs, and shifted our respective focus from definitions to usage.

The Greek New Testament, having been written in *Koiné* Greek, the common, or street language of the people, employed words that were used in religious and secular life alike. Because the sacred and the secular realms share these words in common, the *meaning* of words, whether from *Koiné* Greek or contemporary English, must be determined by lexical principles.²³⁷ Once *meaning* is established, then grammar and context can determine how the word is used, and this principle was what finally guided our separate studies.

²³⁵ BibleWorks, Version 6.0.012Z, Authorized Version.

²³⁶ Butler, *The Meaning of Agapao and Phileo in the Greek New Testament*, 15-18. This section in Butler outlines the methodology he uses in his analysis of these two Greek words, 19-69. His conclusion is found on 70-72.

²³⁷ As Barr ably demonstrates; 1961, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, London: Oxford.

First, this author agrees in part with Arndt, Gingrich, Dongell and Butler concerning their idea that ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω have the same general lexical meaning, namely, to use Butler's words, "love of any kind whatever,"²³⁸ that is then reduced, by context, to one specific meaning. However, this writer has reservations about their claim that there is no contextual shade of difference, or nuance, between ἀγάπη and ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω. As is argued above,²³⁹ the role of love in Wesley's theology is perhaps the most important role of emotion to be found in his writings, and therefore consideration of the meaning, background, and context concerning these Greek words becomes, indeed, of paramount importance in analyzing the roles of emotion in Wesley's theology.

Second, a good lexical source is invaluable in discussing any definition. Since a focal point of this thesis is Wesley, a lexical source has been chosen that was available to him, and for which Wesley respected: Samuel Johnson's dictionary of 1756,²⁴⁰ which lists eighteen different possible definitions for *love* that are context dependent. The OED could also be used, with the same results, for it contains twenty seven context dependent definitions of *love*, and is in agreement with Johnson.²⁴¹

This author would like to suggest a way to reach an understanding of any differences that might exist between ἀγάπη and ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω. Dongell and Butler provide an excellent forum for furthering this discussion, because they go into considerable detail concerning the problematic passage in John 21:15-18, where Jesus asks Peter the question: Do you *love* me? The first two times, Jesus uses the word *agapao* for love; the third time he uses *phileo*. Are these Greek words completely equivalent, or could there be a difference in the shade of their meaning? As Baker notes, little help can be had from scholars, some of whom are mentioned in the previous section, because they generally do not agree with each other, and occasionally one disagrees with himself.

²³⁸ Ibid., 72.

²³⁹ See this thesis, 47: Boetcher's premise statement for his following argument.

²⁴⁰ Samuel Johnson, 1756, Vol. 2, A Dictionary of the English Language: in Which *the Words are deduced from their Originals, Explained in their different Meanings, and Authorized by the Names of the writers in whose Works they are found. Abstracted from the Folio Edition, by the Author Samuel Johnson, A.M. To which is prefixed, a Grammar of the English Language.* Italics, Brackets, and uppercase fonts are Johnson's. See page 33, above.

²⁴¹ OED Online, 'Love,' accessed 6/20/2013.

The context of this passage indicates that Samuel Johnson's definition of the verb *love* as "to regard, with the affection of a friend," is the best choice among the five possible meanings for both ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω, and this choice makes perfect sense in this passage. The *usage* of these words, whether in a secular or a theological setting, is another matter. Once the *meaning* of these two Greek words, both of which are translated as *love*, has been established through reliable lexical sources, the larger context of these verbs within the entire New Testament can suggest possible *nuances* that can be applied to this passage.

Gutteridge suggests a solution²⁴² to which this writer had devoted considerable time in trying to justify, by going over, again (ten years after this writer's first attempt to sort through this conundrum), every occurrence of the word *love* in the New Testament. Once again, this writer was looking for patterns that might reveal nuances, which are a normal aspect of spoken language. When speaking, one's words are accompanied by nuances called facial expressions but units of written text do not come with facial expressions, or do they? Can the patterns developed by considering many units of text perform a similar service as does a facial expression? Gutteridge had used this technique to justify to his satisfaction what he, in turn, had been told concerning this explanation.

First, a solution will be suggested; then this writer will attempt to justify its use in John 21:15-17. Gutteridge suggests that ἀγάπη and ἀγαπάω are words that are concerned with the *nature* of love, and φιλέω is a word that is related to the *expression* of love, and these are differences of nuance only; these nuances are two aspects of the same word, *love*. Reframing this idea, ἀγαπάω indicates, for instance, that it is one's nature to love, whether one loves God or the best seats in the house. The word φιλέω denotes that one expresses one's love, whether for God or for, say, preferential treatment. Jesus' first nuanced question is, "Peter, is it your nature to love me?" Of course, Peter, missing the nuance, would answer in the affirmative that he has, indeed, expressed his love for Jesus. Jesus replies, "Feed my lambs," my little ones.

Dongell understands why Jesus asks such a series of questions; he was preparing Peter for sacrificial service.²⁴³ This line of thought brings up the question of why

²⁴² Rev. Percy Gutteridge (1909-1998) gave me this suggestion during several sessions of private conversation.

²⁴³ Joseph Dongell, 1997, *John, A Bible Commentary in the Wesleyan Tradition*, 248.

Jesus is interested in raising the issue of Peter's *nature*. Peter's true nature is certainly revealed in his actions on the day that Jesus was crucified.²⁴⁴ Peter lied, then he lied again, then lied a third time with accompanying curses. When Jesus asked these questions he had in mind the cure that Peter needed, a new nature, given by the Holy Spirit through the process of new birth, a need of which he is not yet cognizant. Jesus was preparing Peter to receive the new birth necessary for true sacrificial service, which is the same message that Wesley spent his life in preaching.

Peter answers, "Yes Lord, I have expressed my love for you."

But Jesus wants more. He wants love to be restored to Peter's nature in the same way that love is at the very core of God's nature. While older humans are adept at hiding their true nature, when one is under pressure one often reacts to the situation according to one's nature. The sinner may instantly react to being cut off in traffic by cursing. Peter instantly, and angrily, reacts to the maid's question, according to his true nature, by lying and cursing. Significantly, after Pentecost, it is never recorded that Peter responds in this manner.

A second time, Jesus asks the question, "Peter, is it in your nature to love me?" Peter answers, "Yes, Lord, you know I express my love for you." Jesus replies, "Feed my sheep," my older ones.

A third time, Jesus finally asks, "Peter, do you express your love for me?" He meets Peter at Peter's own level. Peter, not understanding what Jesus is getting at, is naturally pained by this line of questioning his love for Jesus. Perhaps Peter remembers how he acted the night of the Crucifixion, but he fails to realize that love is not yet fully integrated into his nature. It is with great pain that Peter replies, again, "Lord, you know all things. You know that I have expressed my love for you." Jesus replies, "Feed my sheep," for I have chosen you as one of my shepherds. Peter could not yet hear what was "outside the quotes," because his spiritual ears had not yet been opened. In fact, he had just been preparing to resume his occupation as a fulltime fisherman.

This conversation indicates that Peter did not yet understand what Jesus was talking about, but on the day of Pentecost he would understand. Just as John Wesley discovered through his own Aldersgate experience, the very purpose of new birth

²⁴⁴ Mark 14:66-72.

and Pentecost is to give Christians the capacity *to love* even the unlovable ones, and that takes a real change in one's nature, for Pentecost and Aldersgate include the healing of one's emotions. This pericope indicates that the role of emotion in Christianity, and in Wesley's theology, is not inconsequential.

Using the two verses that were previously cited, above, this explanation makes sense.

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved [ἀγαπάω] this present world,

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, whose nature is to love [ἀγαπάω] this present world,

1 John 2:15 Love [ἀγαπάω] not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love [ἀγαπάω] the world, the love [ἀγάπη] of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2:15 Let it not be in your nature to love the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man's nature is to love [ἀγαπάω] the world, then the love of the Father is not part of his nature.²⁴⁵

This explanation does not contribute to the *definition* of these Greek words, but it does indicate new facets, or nuances, concerning the *use* of ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω. This author was not able to find one case in the New Testament where this solution failed to add to the understanding of the passage. Consideration of two additional Scripture passages, below, further illustrate whether it is the nature of love, or the expression of love that is indicated by this principle of nuance.

Mark 12:³⁰ And thou shalt love [ἀγαπάω] the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. ³¹ And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love [ἀγαπάω] thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Mark 12:³⁰ And it shall be your nature to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

³¹ And the second *is* like, *namely* this, it shall be your nature to love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.²⁴⁶

Many Christians, including Wesley, see New Testament commands as promises. Mark 12:30 deals with the heart, the soul, the mind, and the strength of a person. In reframing this statement, one could reasonably say this passage deals with the state of one's nature, and this assertion is reinforced by the solution just presented. It is good news, indeed, to know that God promises to enable us to obey him, and this

²⁴⁵ BibleWorks, Version 6.0.012Z, Authorized Version.
²⁴⁶ Ibid.

message of *assurance* is important in Wesley's theology,²⁴⁷ and in this thesis. The emotional aspect of assurance will be dealt with in chapter three.

This is the last justification check for this solution that space allows, and it further illustrates the *nuanced* relationship between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω.

John 3:35 The Father loveth [ἀγαπάω] the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

John 3:35 It is the Father's nature to love the Son, and he has shown this by giving all things into his hand.

John 5:20 For the Father loveth [φιλέω] the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 5:20 For the Father expresses his love for the Son, by showing him all things that himself does: and he will show him greater works than these, that you may marvel.²⁴⁸

In all of these illustrations the meaning of these four Greek words, two words are nouns and the other two are verbs, remains the same; they all still mean love, love of any kind whatsoever. The context and grammar of the passage specifies the type of love, and the pattern-developed nuance that is added refers to the manner in which this love is related to the context of the pericope. This discussion will prove to be valuable in the analysis of several emotions that involve love, and especially in the investigation of the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences.

Use of the Word *Continuum*

As will be presented, the term *continuum* is used in this thesis because there is no clear line of demarcation between, say, cognitive and emotional processes occurring in the brain. This paper also discusses Damasio's idea of an emotions-feelings continuum, and an organic continuum described by Albert Outler concerning the *Ordo Salutis*, both for the same reason, namely, a clear line of demarcation separating these various concepts does not exist. An example of an inappropriate use of the word continuum would be to suggest, for instance, the idea of a human-divine continuum, because there is not only a fine line separating these two entities, but one of infinite width.

²⁴⁷ CF Outler's comment, "A fourth hermeneutical rule follows from [Wesley's] doctrine of grace and free will: that all moral commands in Scripture are also 'covered promises', since God never commands the impossible and his grace is always efficacious in every faithful will." BCE 1:58.

Wesley writes, "there is no contrariety at all between the law and the gospel; that there is no need for the law to pass away in order to the establishing of the gospel. Indeed neither of them supersedes the other, but they agree perfectly well together. Yea, the very same words, considered in different respects, are parts both of the law and of the gospel. If they are considered as commandments, they are parts of the law: if as promises, of the gospel," from Sermon 25: 'Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse the Fifth,' BCE 1:554.

²⁴⁸ BibleWorks, Version 6.0.012Z, Authorized Version.

Pessoa's concept of a cognitive-emotional continuum is used to express a relationship between emotion and reason in a clear manner, and this usage can be analogically linked to the concept of the space-time continuum. Concerning the concept of space-time, space is not time nor is time, space, although these two components make up one entity called space-time. Likewise, when the concept of a reason-emotion continuum is suggested, it is not meant to equate, nor blend together reason and emotion, but rather to express their unity. Thus, the word continuum includes the idea that cognition and emotion vary as to proportion in their relationship with each other. Therefore, to ignore either reason or emotion would be akin to someone going through life with two good hands and arms but who ties one arm behind one's back. The religious fanatic of today and the enthusiast of Wesley's era provide examples of people with just such a restriction.²⁴⁹

Limitations of this Thesis

The focus of this paper is on *some* of the roles of emotion in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley, because there is not sufficient space available to include a comprehensive analysis of all of the possible roles that emotion can play throughout the entire gamut of the Wesley brothers' theology. Therefore, with this limitation in mind, this writer has chosen to first lay a firm foundation down upon which a reliable analysis of any of the roles of emotion can be erected, but only concentrate on some of the major roles of emotion that are associated primarily with the Wesleys' Aldersgate experiences. The foundational principles that are developed in this thesis can provide significant help not only to this author, but perhaps also to other writers, who may wish to further investigate these, and other, roles of emotion within the Wesleyan corpus.

Second, because he is convinced that the Wesley brothers Aldersgate experiences truly are "a demonstration of the central place of emotion in religion;"²⁵⁰ he has chosen to selectively focus his research primarily on this soteriological area, which in turn will further limit the number of roles of emotion that are to be investigated.

For instance, it was demonstrated that, in Wesley's day, the word *love* had eighteen different definitions. However, this paper is concerned only with those

²⁴⁹ See Ronald A. Knox (1888-1957), 1951, *Enthusiasm, A Chapter in the History of Religion*, 2nd ed., Oxford: Clarendon, for a Catholic view of enthusiasm; a profile of John Wesley can be found on pp. 422-482. Also see the anti-Methodist, George Lavington (1684-1762), 1749, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists, Compar'd*, London.

²⁵⁰ Edwin Lewis, 1938, in *What Happened At Aldersgate*, Elmer T. Clark, ed., 80-81.

aspects of love that are pertinent to emotion, because while multitudes of authors have already written voluminous amounts of work on the non-emotional side of *love*, very few have written on the emotional character of *love*.

This tight focus on emotion may seem to create a reductionist approach to, say, *love*, but such a reductionist approach is not the intent of the author, because he has acknowledged that this word is *polysemous*, that is, the word *love* has many meanings; and, he has provide eighteen definitions for this word, but he has only selected those definitions for analysis that deal with emotion, because this thesis only focuses on emotion. Additionally, it must be emphasized that this paper deliberates primarily on emotion, and only secondarily on reason. While this choice may also seem to be reductionist, this decision has been made because there is so little written on emotion, and so much written on reason. The idea behind this emphasis on emotion is not that emotion is all-important, but that so little has been written on the subject of emotion in theology. This thesis is intended to make a small contribute to what has, by and large, been missing from theology.

The roles of emotion with respect to volition, decision, boldness, intuition, belief, or eighteenth-century enthusiasm, et cetera, are important, but have not been selected for investigation in this paper solely because of space limitation. It is this author's intent to write a second volume, and a third volume if necessary, to this thesis that will include these other important concepts. Meanwhile, it is important to note that the foundational material he needs for further investigation has been provided in this paper.

Anticipated Outcomes

Both heart and head are necessary, that is, reason and emotion are both needed in order that one might experience God's full salvation, and this intuitively derived statement should be fully justified by this thesis. Moreover, hopefully, some of emotion's roles in Wesley's soteriology will be clearly delineated by presenting numerous relationships, such as that between emotion and reason, emotion and full salvation, and the role played by certain emotions, such as love, or the despair occasionally felt by both Wesley brothers prior to, during, and even after their Aldersgate experiences.

Indeed, Wesley's ministry, and his theology in general, could be described as a single theme: the quest for full salvation. Wesley describes his understanding of *full salvation* in these words:

Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation, whereby 'through grace' we 'are saved by faith', consisting of those two grand branches [of Christianity], justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God: by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God.²⁵¹

By reframing the various relationships ensconced within Wesley's soteriology in contemporary language, this writer would be most gratified if even one other pilgrim's journey were made but a little easier than his own. In any case, Wesley has made this writer's pilgrimage easier, and he feels a strong impetus to share his thoughts with others desiring full salvation.

²⁵¹ Sermon 85: 'On Working Out Our Own Salvation,' BCE 3:204. Brackets are mine.

Chapter 2

The Literature Review

Introduction

This thesis explores the role of emotion in the soteriology of Wesley in order to understand how the resulting patterns and perceptions might be of benefit to today's Christians.²⁵² In order to accomplish this goal, various contributions from contemporary research on emotion can provide invaluable help by furnishing the technical expertise needed for a logical analysis of emotions which the researcher can then use to extract the meaning and/or significance of the emotions selected for examination.

Contemporary Research On Emotions

Clapper, who wrote a dissertation (1985)²⁵³ that comes nearest to the theme of this thesis observes, in a more recent publication (2007), that, concerning the utilization of emotional theory,

there is a remarkable convergence in recent theorizing about the nature of emotion. The idea that emotions are purely physical, irrational experiences that happen outside of the input or control of cognitive capacities must surely be rejected. The cognitive dimension of emotion can be seen in their intentional, or what we might say their *transitive*, nature: they take objects. These objects are typically defined by certain beliefs, judgments or construals. Not only that, but these belief-related experiences we call "emotions" function as motivations to act in certain ways, in other words, they function as dispositions to behave.²⁵⁴

Two facts stand out in his statement, above: first, Clapper recognizes the importance of understanding the cognitive nature of emotions; of seeing emotion, as John Wesley would say, as a spring or spring-board for action, as is fully described in the previous chapter. Second, he recognizes that there has been a convergence, so to speak, of emotional theories. It is this convergence on the cognitive aspect of the nature of emotion that links together the several expert specialists cited as authorities

²⁵² This same point is considered by Matthew Elliott, *Faithful Feelings*, p. 15.

²⁵³ Gregory Scott Clapper, 1985, *John Wesley On Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and Their Role in the Christian Life and Theology*, PhD diss.

²⁵⁴ Clapper, 2007, *Is Love An Affection or an Emotion*, chap. 9, 84; in "The Many Facets of Love: Philosophical Explorations," Thomas J. Oord, ed. Italics are Clapper's.

in this paper, experts who come from the fields of neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, and theology. This link can best be described as the holding of a cognitive view of emotion, which link also connects to Wesley, himself.

Clapper, in the edited edition of his 1985 dissertation, published by the same name in 1989,²⁵⁵ cites nine different authorities from the fields of psychology and philosophy to support his argument, primarily because one lone authority does not, and cannot, have a comprehensive, expert knowledge that spans the entire fields of psychology and philosophy. Nevertheless, Clapper maintains cohesiveness, that is, a consistent, logical *argument* of his position, by using experts whose *combined* knowledge does, collectively, span the necessary fields of study, and thus provides Clapper with the information that is needed to successfully present his argument. For these same reasons, this writer has also used a likewise carefully selected panel of experts, whose combined testimony provides the necessary contemporary research on emotions that are needed, in order to hopefully present a logical, comprehensive, and compelling argument for this thesis.

When Clapper published the 1989 version of his dissertation, neuroscience had not yet begun its rapid rise to national and international prominence; for that occurs in the first decade of the twenty-first-century, and therefore, he was unable to utilize information from this field of science. By 2010, however, the field of neuroscience had blossomed into many highly specialized disciplines, as did the study of emotion, to the point that it is now no longer possible for one person to acquire expertise spanning all of the pertinent information that is necessary for the overall study of emotion with respect to neuroscience and psychology. Prior to 1985, psychology had, in the same manner, expanded its knowledge base to the degree that experts began specialty studies on individual aspects within the overall discipline of emotion. Thus, Clapper was forced to incorporate the ideas of several experts in the fields of psychology and philosophy in order to develop his comprehensive and cohesive argument.

Therefore, the use of several experts in the fields of neuroscience and psychology in this paper, rather than causing a loss of argument coherence, jointly contribute to strengthening *the coherence, or logic, of the argument presented* by strengthening the accuracy and breadth of the scientific information utilized in it; together, these

²⁵⁵ Gregory Scott Clapper, 1989.

specialists, who are involved in contemporary research on emotion, provide the information that is needed in order to more fully understand the emotional phenomena under analysis. Coherence of an argument is also enhanced by ensuring that the scientific contributions produced by two, or more, specialists do not produce ambiguity.

Ambiguity would have been introduced in his argument if this writer were to have chosen to incorporate some of the work of psychologist Robert C. Solomon, who is, in his own right, excellent, because Solomon has chosen to reverse, for instance, the meaning of the ancient term *passion*, a term extensively used by Wesley, with the same meaning that Wesley's generation gave to the word *affection*.²⁵⁶ This reversal of word definition would necessarily conflict with the contributions other experts whose work is incorporated in this thesis, thereby creating ambiguity and confusion in the mind of the reader. By himself, Solomon presents a cohesive argument, but, when added to the experts employed in this paper, cohesion would suffer. As presented in chapter one, word usage and meaning can become critical points in any essay or thesis, especially if the writer is dealing with two vastly different eras in human history, such as the eighteenth and twenty-first centuries.

Thus, the overall argument presented in this thesis is a clear, strongly cohesive, logical argument because information from several carefully selected experts, each with their own separate *sub-specialty*, is incorporated in this paper. As noted above, Clapper uses a total of nine different psychologists and philosophers in the published edition of his thesis (1989).

Neuroscience and Emotion

It is common knowledge that neuroscientists and psychologists have made tremendous advances in the past thirty-five years in understanding how the brain functions. Through these advances significant help is now available that can facilitate a better understanding of many of the aspects of emotion, such as the initially intangible concepts of cognitive and affectional processes, intuition, feelings and emotion, or imagination. Numerous practitioners in the field of psychology have developed theory that, combined with advances in neuroscience, can clarify the many roles of human emotion. These powerful tools will be

²⁵⁶ Robert C. Solomon, 1993, *The Passions*, 67-70.

delineated in subsequent chapters, and will add significant clarification and understanding of the role of emotion in general.

Recent neuroscientific discoveries have led many researchers²⁵⁷ to believe that there is no clear line of demarcation between cognitive and emotional processes occurring in the brain. It has been only within the past thirty years or so that scientists have begun to realize, thanks to research in both neuroscience and psychology, that this situation might be the case. If so, then the various roles of emotion, whether in the sciences or theology, will be of paramount importance with respect to the goal of understanding *any* aspect of human nature.

The Authorities Used in this Thesis

The scientific authors contributing to this thesis all share a cognitive concept of emotion, but each specializes in a different area of study; they do not compete with each other, they complement one another. Together, and only together, they cumulatively provide the breadth of scientific expertise that is needed to cohesively, or logically, build the strong argument that this thesis requires.

Furthermore, when examining the Wesleyan concept of *conscience*, it would be difficult for science, by definition, to provide answers because, for the most part, the conscience is a *metaphysical* entity that lies beyond, or outside of, *scientific* investigation. It is the theologian who is eminently qualified to investigate metaphysical concepts.

The neuroscientific, psychological, and theological principles used in this thesis describes aspects of how human nature, specifically human emotions, work; and, through this combined information the role of emotion in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley may be reliably determined.

Luiz Pessoa, Neuroscientist

Luiz Pessoa, in 2013, published *The Cognitive-Emotional Brain, From Interactions to Integration*. His extensive research utilizes

behavioral and functional MRI [fMRI] methods to study cognition and emotion, with an emphasis on the interactions between cognitive and emotional brain systems. He also studies interactions between cognition and motivation. An additional focus of his research centers on the development of statistical and computational tools for the analysis of fMRI

²⁵⁷ Luiz Pessoa, 2013, *The Cognitive-Emotional Brain*, lists a bibliography of 50 pages printed in small font without the use of line spacing between entries, in citing hundreds of expert authors. Because the date of a publication can be of significant importance, Pessoa's bibliography lists the date of publication immediately after the author(s) name(s); this writer had, independently, made this same choice for the *works cited* in this thesis, and for the same reason.

data, particularly methods to link moment-to-moment fluctuations in behavior to single-trial brain responses. His research project studies how Emotion and Cognition interact.²⁵⁸

Pessoa (2013), a highly qualified expert in the field of cognition and emotion,²⁵⁹ writes that there *is* no strong dichotomy between emotion and reason. He thinks cognition and emotion should be considered as a cognitive-emotional, or rational-emotional, continuum,²⁶⁰ much as our current concept of space and time has changed within the last century to the idea of a single entity called the space-time continuum.²⁶¹ Thus, the word continuum, as used here, contains the idea that both cognition and emotion are present, but vary as to proportion although there is no sharp line of demarcation that separates them. Magai (2008) also utilizes the idea of “the cognitive-affective system” in her up-to-date discussion on the “Cognitive-Affective Developmental Theory” of Labouvie-Vief.²⁶² These powerful ideas from the cognitive viewpoint of emotion are incorporated within this thesis.

Antonio Damasio (1944-), MD, Neuroscientist

Damasio has written two books that have contributed to the development of this paper: 1994, Repub. 2006, *Descartes' Error*, and 1999, *The Feeling of What Happens, Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. He holds the

David Dornsife Professor of Neuroscience, Professor of Psychology, Professor of Philosophy, and Director of the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California; he is also an adjunct professor at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California.

Damasio has made seminal contributions to the understanding of brain processes underlying, emotions, feelings, decision-making and consciousness. He has been named “Highly Cited Researcher” by the Institute for Scientific Information.²⁶³

Of particular interest to this paper, Damasio, who accepts a cognitive understanding of emotion, writes that, “contrary to traditional scientific opinion, feelings are just as cognitive as other percepts.”²⁶⁴ He contributes to a clearer understanding of how

²⁵⁸ <http://mnc.umd.edu/faculty/pessoa> Accessed June 20, 2019.

²⁵⁹ Ibid. *The Cognitive-Emotional Brain*: Pessoa is a professor of psychology, member of the Program in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science, principal investigator of the Laboratory of Cognition and Emotion, and Director of the Maryland Neuroimaging Center at the Univ. of Maryland, College Park, from the reverse cover of the book.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., as can be seen even in his book's title, *The Cognitive-Emotional Brain*, and found throughout the text.

²⁶¹ See page 65 for a fuller presentation of the space-time continuum.

²⁶² Carol Magai, 2008, ‘Long-Lived Emotions. A Life Course Perspective on Emotional Development,’ in *Handbook of Emotions*, Michael Lewis, Jeannette M. Haviland-Jones, and Lisa Feldman Barrett, Eds., 380-381.

²⁶³ <https://dornsife.usc.edu/cf/faculty-and-staff/faculty.cfm?pid=1008328> Accessed 6/25/2019.

²⁶⁴ Op. cit., *Descartes' error*, xv.

feelings and emotions that are expressed, say, within the Wesleyan corpus, relate to each other and how these faculties relate to the outside world, thereby greatly facilitating an understanding of the role of the emotions that are examined in these works.

Nico H. Frijda (1927-2015), MD, Neuropsychologist

Nico H. Frijda, one of the founding-fathers of cognitive emotional theory, has been of immense help in the writing of this thesis, primarily through the contributions made by his major work, 1985, *The Emotions, Studies in Emotion & Social Interaction*. At the time of his death he was Emeritus psychology professor at the University of Amsterdam, and wrote thirty-eight journal articles and five books, mostly about human emotion.²⁶⁵ As with the two previous authorities, Frijda's ideas have been thoroughly validated through his extensive, and intensive, research, and this research data is fully documented throughout his five books.

Frijda writes:

The aim of this book is to present a survey of data theories on emotion. This book considers the primary questions concerning emotions: (1) What is the nature of the phenomena called "emotions" or "emotional"? (2) Which conditions - stimuli, dispositions, activities - give rise to these phenomena? (3) What functions, if any, do these phenomena serve? and (4) By what processes and through what mechanisms do the conditions lead to these phenomena?²⁶⁶

In answering these, and other, questions so ably, Frijda provides this researcher with the information that becomes so vital in accomplishing the goal of this thesis.

Daniel Siegel, Psychiatrist and Interpersonal Neurobiologist

Siegel is a neuroscientist whose expertise includes studying "the intricate intertwining of mind, brain, and relationships,"²⁶⁷ and his research concerning the relationships between the mind, music, and emotion has been particularly helpful to this writer. Siegel's expertise is recognized by his peers as he develops a "synthesis of neurobiology, research psychology and cognitive science."²⁶⁸

While he is not interested in theology, his research is fully compatible in "understanding [the] developmental processes" of the human personality.²⁶⁹ His contribution to this thesis is primarily in the area of understanding the role of emotion in the music and hymns of the Wesley brothers.

²⁶⁵ <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2008/05/random> Accessed 6/20/2019.

²⁶⁶ Op. cit., 1985, *The Emotions, Studies in Emotion & Social Interaction*, 1.

²⁶⁷ Daniel Siegel, 2012, *The Developing Mind*, 2nd ed., ix.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., inside front fly.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

Maryanne Wolf, Neuroscientist

Wolf's area of expertise, backed up by extensive research conducted by her, and others, is focused on how the brain is able to read written language. Her information can answer the question of how two scholars could read the same material but reach opposing conclusions concerning the meaning of the text in question. Wolf's research specifically reveals how one's emotions, one's likes and dislikes, can influence one's conclusions; thus, *the role of emotion in the reader* of Wesley's writings becomes a pertinent factor in this study of the role of emotion in the Soteriology of John and Charles Wesley.

Wolf "is a professor of child development at Tuft's University," "and is the director of the Center for Reading and Language Research."²⁷⁰ Her knowledge of the reading-brain, a product of "her vast knowledge of neuroscience, psychology, literature, and linguistics,"²⁷¹ is expressed in her book, 2007, *Proust and the Squid, The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*.

Francis Mark Mondimore (1953-), Neuropsychiatrist

Moribund is a psychiatrist working with the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and he specializes in depression. Besides this book, he has written *Bipolar Disorder: A Guide for Patients and Families*, and *Adolescent Depression: A Guide for Parents*.²⁷² He is an adherent of cognitive-behavioral therapy,²⁷³ and his contribution to this thesis is to only provide current and reliable information that has been derived from neuroscientific investigation concerning depression.

Ole Kristian Hallesby (1879-1961), Theologian

Hallesby is a twentieth-century Lutheran pietist with roots in Norwegian revivalism, and who had spent most of his life as a professor of systematic theology at the Norwegian School of Theology (1909 to 1952), in Oslo. He was reared in Norway under the traditional pietistic teachings of the firebrand Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824), whose tenets include conversion and Christian life; Hallesby, as a young man, had two conversion experiences, one in 1894 and the other in 1902, that were similar to John Wesley's two experiences of 1725 and 1738, and who also had been greatly influenced by German pietism. He attended university in Germany, where

²⁷⁰ Op. Cit., 2007, *Proust and the Squid*, rear fly leaf.

²⁷¹ Ibid., front flyleaf.

²⁷² Francis Mark Mondimore, 2006, *Depression, The Mood Disease*, rear inside fly/

²⁷³ Ibid., 171.

he furthered his tie to German pietism that began in his youth.²⁷⁴ This common link, for Wesley and for Hallesby, to German pietism produced similar ministries: both have a sharp focus on holiness. Wesley favors the term *experimental religion*,

Wednesday 2 [1767] The advice therefore which I gave them was: (1) Let all the people sacredly abstain from backbiting, talebearing, evil-speaking. (2) Let all our preachers abstain from returning railing for railing,⁴⁹(23930) either in public or in private, as well as from disputing. (3) Let them never preach controversy, but plain, practical, and experimental religion.²⁷⁵

Hallesby's German-derived pietistic upbringing teaches him to use the term *experiential theology*. Both terms have exactly the same meaning, that is, what religion, or theology, teaches should also be experienced in real life; and, for both men this insistence on real life experience became a major part of their lives and teaching.

Both Wesley and Hallesby spoke of the *ordo salutis*, and with roughly similar meanings, but using different language. Concerning this *way of salvation*, for Hallesby, his biographer writes:

In light of this experiential and psychological perspective, Hallesby divided the process of salvation into four stages: (1) the call, (2) conversion, (3) justification/rebirth and (4) the holy life.

Hallesby understands the call as God's regenerating work on the sinful persons who are awakened to the knowledge of their sins and made able to open themselves for salvation. Conversion happens by choice, when the sinner accepts the judgment of God and repents, and, in hopelessness, submits to God's grace, believing in Him. In the moment of faith, the sinner receives full salvation. In justification, one takes part in the new relationship with God that is made possible by Christ's work, and through rebirth the Spirit of Christ enters the heart. Saying "yes" to salvation entails that in justification, one is freed from the guilt of sin and through rebirth released from the power of sin. Life as a Christian is a holy life.²⁷⁶

This citation concerning Hallesby contains several points that are similar to Wesley's teaching. While Hallesby's labels for the stages of the *ordo salutis* are different, his statement contains much, if not all, of Wesley's ideas on this subject. For example, Hallesby's reference to "*the sinner being made able [by God] to open themselves for salvation*" is an exact parallel to Wesley's idea of prevenient grace.

Second, both Wesley and Hallesby use the term *conversion* to indicate the miracles of new birth and sanctification. Also, Wesley would whole-heartedly

²⁷⁴ Torleiv Austad, ed. Mark C. Mattes 2013, *Twentieth-Century Lutheran Theologians*, 70-71

²⁷⁵ JWJ, BCE 22:101. Underline mine.

²⁷⁶ Torleiv Austad, *Ole Kristian Hallesby (1879-1961)*, 2013, cited in "Twentieth-Century Lutheran Theologians," 86. Underlining mine.

approve of Hallesby's statement, above, that "*saying 'yes' to salvation entails that in justification, one is freed from the guilt of sin and through rebirth [sanctification] released from the power of sin. Life as a Christian is a holy life.*" Hallesby's statement is an accurate summary of the Wesley brothers', as well as his own, ministry.

Hallesby's phrase, "in hopelessness," above, when describing the sinner's condition as he or she earnestly comes to God for salvation, has an exact parallel in the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences, as will be fully described in the next chapter. These unique parallels in the teaching and experiences of both Hallesby and the Wesley brothers could only come from their common heritage in German pietism; all three men emphatically taught that *life as a Christian is a holy life*. Therefore, Hallesby becomes the ideal theologian who could clarify and condense the Wesley brothers' ideas concerning the conscience.

Hallesby's Contribution To This Thesis

An important aspect of this thesis is the examination of the role of emotion with respect to one's conscience. Here, science is unable to provide much assistance because, by and large, the basic concept of the conscience is a *metaphysical* one. Wesley teaches, concerning one's conscience, that

I. 11. in all the offices of conscience the 'unction of the Holy One' is indispensably needful. Without this [unction] neither could we clearly discern our lives or tempers, nor could we judge of the rule whereby we are to walk, or of our conformity or disconformity to it.²⁷⁷

In other words,, Wesley writes that it is only through God's direct influence upon a human conscience that it becomes possible for the conscience to function at all. Wesley writes many more, similar statements, but this one citation, above, should suffice in order to support the contention that, at least from Wesley's viewpoint, the concept of the conscience includes a numinous component that is indispensable for its proper operation.

The best neuroscience can do in explaining the operation of the conscience is to tell what areas of the brain light up in a fMRI scan, but this information proves to be useless; science cannot explain the operations of the conscience because the spiritual

²⁷⁷ Op. cit., Sermon 105, *On Conscience*, BCE 3:485.

component of this human faculty is beyond science's grasp, for it is God-given, says Wesley.

1. They show 'the work of the law', the substance of it, though not the letter, 'written in their hearts' [, that is, in their conscience], by the same hand which wrote the commandments on the tables of stone; 'their conscience also bearing them witness', whether they act suitably thereto or not.²⁷⁸

Wesley writes, above, that it is God, himself, who implants spiritual laws upon the human conscience, or, in metaphysical terms, the human heart. Therefore, in order to make such an examination, one must turn to the theologian; but, not all theologians are qualified to write on this subject.

In examining Hallesby's book, 1933, *Conscience*, this writer has carefully examined all of Hallesby's teaching concerning the conscience, and he has found it to be sound, evangelical [accords with Scripture], true, and fully compatible with the Wesleyan corpus. Hallesby's information concerning the conscience has proven to be most helpful in understanding the Wesleyan concept of *conscience*, and while his contribution is compatible with Wesley's teaching, it is formatted in a condensed form in twentieth-century language. John Wesley even wrote a sermon (1788) entitled *On Conscience*,²⁷⁹ but his intent was primarily not to teach how the Christian conscience operates, but how one can use one's conscience for one's eternal profit; Hallesby's intent is to explain the operating principles that govern the conscience.

Robert M. Solomon, bishop of Singapore, wrote an excellent update to Hallesby's book, entitled, 2010, *The Conscience, Rediscovering the Inner Compass*, wherein Hallesby's early twentieth-century language is expressed in twenty-first-century terms, but little new content is added; Solomon extensively quotes Hallesby. Together, these two books provide the means needed in order to accurately analyze the role of emotion with respect to one's conscience; an important goal, indeed, and one that is difficult, at best, for neuroscience or psychology to accomplish because, as Wesley taught, the conscience is a spiritual faculty, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter; science is not, by definition, able to work in the realm of the numinous.

²⁷⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 85: *On Working Out Our Own Salvation*, BCE 3:200.

²⁷⁹ Op. Cit., BCE 4:479-490. Sermons 10, 11 and 12 contain significant information concerning the conscience, BCE1:267-313.

A Literature Review

The doctoral dissertations of three American writers²⁸⁰ who come closest to this writer's subject have contributed to his research, and two of these dissertations approach his thesis.

Gregory Clapper

The first dissertation is by Clapper, 1985, *John Wesley on Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and their Role in the Christian Life and Theology*.²⁸¹ He provides, in his abstract, critical questions used in developing the focus of his dissertation, some of which this writer has appropriated:

Is Wesley's conception of the affections rational? Does Wesley show awareness of the human capacity for emotional self-deception and narcissism? Does his emphasis on the affections necessarily lead to a quietistic individualism?²⁸²

While Clapper examines emotion, the role of emotion in Wesleyan theology is not his goal. Clapper did not have the advantage of a well-developed, modern theory of emotion; indeed, in the intervening thirty years between his dissertation and this writer's thesis, tremendous strides have been made in advancing emotion theory. Clapper philosophically restates the focus of his dissertation: "Wesley's conception of religious affections, and how that conception looks on modern analysis, is the point of this study," and this statement differentiates the focal point between his study and this writer's thesis. This writer agrees with Clapper's idea of the meaning of Wesley's phrase *religious affections*, and this phrase provides the point of contact between the respective papers of Clapper and this writer, for this thesis builds upon his conception of the phrase *religious affections*. This paper incorporates Clapper's concept that the "depiction of the affections plays a key role in his [Wesley's] understanding of Christianity" and this author further develops his ideas into an investigation of the role of emotion, itself, in Wesley's soteriology; this thesis also further advances Clapper's idea that Wesley's "use of emotion language also has enduring relevance" as this writer endeavors to translate Wesley's language into that of the twenty-first century.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Matthew Elliott, Gregory Clapper, and Richard Steele; their works will be discussed, below.

²⁸¹ Op. Cit., Gregory Clapper, 1985, PhD Diss.

²⁸² Op. Cit., ii.

²⁸³ Ibid., 4.

With respect to the conscience, Clapper writes that Wesley

did not hold [the conscience] in high regard, and in fact saw it as a highly fallible, humanly-formed faculty of judgment, which usually acts only to conform us to society!”²⁸⁴

On the same page, he attempts to prove that Wesley had little regard for the concept of conscience by citing numerous comments made by Wesley in his *Notes Upon the New Testament*, but Clapper’s comments on Wesley’s *Notes* fail to discriminate between the unregenerate conscience and the sanctified godly conscience, although two pages later he does note this important difference. Clapper only had access to volumes 7, 11, 25, and 26 of the BCE; he did not have access to the first four volumes of the BCE (Sermons 1-150), including Wesley’s Sermon 105, *On Conscience*, as evidenced by his bibliography. If Clapper could have had access to the not-as-yet printed Volume 3 of the BCE, he would have undoubtedly read Wesley’s Sermon 105, *On Conscience*, written in 1788, with great interest. Indeed, this sermon surely would have changed his opinion of Wesley’s idea concerning the conscience; however, this writer is fairly sure that Clapper was not aware of this sermon.

In the next chapter evidence will be presented to demonstrate that Wesley has just the opposite view of the conscience in that Wesley holds the concept of conscience in the highest regard, because this father of Methodism teaches that unless the evangelist first pricks the conscience of the sinner, all of one’s preaching is done in vain.

Richard Steele

The second dissertation closest to this writer’s thesis is by Steele, 1991, “*Gracious affection*” and “*true virtue*” in the experimental theologies of Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley.²⁸⁵ Steele’s stated purpose is to provide “extended comparisons” of the thinking of these two great revivalists, and to examine the relationship that existed between them.²⁸⁶ Steele rightly said that both men understood that the work of the Holy Spirit was aimed at raising “the affections,” because both believed that “affections were construed as acts of the will.”²⁸⁷ Furthermore, Steele recognizes similarities between how both men interpret

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 72. Brackets mine.

²⁸⁵ Op. Cit., Richard Steele, PhD Diss.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 87.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 90.

“religious emotion (‘gracious affection’) and moral character (‘true virtue’).”²⁸⁸

Steele goes on to restate his purpose as a retracing of the literary and historical ties between these two great reformers, and a comparison of their understanding of “Christian experience and practice.”²⁸⁹

In fact, Steele provides a number of thesis statements. In Chapter 1, section 2, entitled *Thesis and Method*, he writes the clearest statement of the purpose of his dissertation:

This, then, is our thesis: Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley shared a common belief that “the experimental knowledge of God” necessarily entails three heuristically distinguishable but existentially inseparable components: the avowal of Christian doctrine, the cultivation of “true virtue,” and the experience of “gracious affections.” Or to put this in more psychological (or as the Puritans would have said, pneumatological) terms, sanctification consists in the increasingly harmonious cooperation of the faculties of the soul (the intellect, the will, and the emotions) through the agency of the indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ.²⁹⁰

Thus, Steele’s primary aim is to develop a comparison between the thinking of Wesley and Edwards concerning the three points (underlined, above) that he enumerates; part of that comparison includes mentioning the role of emotion *en passant*, as he discusses similarities and differences in their understanding of “gracious affection” and “true virtue.” In this writer’s thesis, the primary focus is on the role of emotion, itself, with respect to Wesley’s soteriology.

Matthew Elliott

Elliott’s book, 2006, *Faithful Feelings, Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, rounding out the trio of writings containing themes that are closest to this writer’s thesis, was helpful, partly because it was more recent and more sources were available.²⁹¹ His main focus is the use, rather than the role, of emotion in the New Testament, and he investigates select individual emotions exhibited in the Bible. This writer found Elliott’s book to be interesting and helpful.

Mark Horst

Hosrt, in his 1985 doctoral dissertation, entitled, *Christian Understanding and the Life of Faith in John Wesley’s Thought*, works

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 1

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 15. Parentheses are Steele’s.

²⁹¹ Op. cit., Matthew Elliott.

from the supposition that the various features of his [Wesley's] thought have their own integrity and that when taken together they form a coherent whole, each member playing its part in an overarching design.²⁹²

Horst's statement is taken by this writer as a tacit foundational supposition for this thesis, in that, unlike, say, Calvin's formal *systematic* presentation of theology, Wesley's theology (and soteriology) is similarly *systematic*, but not formally; Wesley was a folk theologian and presented his theology in the form of sermons, letters, pamphlets, and essays that are, nevertheless, in Horst's words, "when taken together... form a coherent whole, each member playing its part in an overarching design" (underlined, above). Horst's dissertation convinces this writer of the truth of this statement.

Horst's concept, above, is a very powerful idea; this author has not only assumed it to be true, but has also used it in carefully selecting his panel of neuroscientists and psychologists who can provide the appropriate emotions theory, as needed, in order to understand the various roles that emotion plays in Wesley's soteriology. The author's careful assemblage of scientific experts, "when taken together... [do] form a coherent whole, with each [scientist] playing [their] part in [the] overarching design" of this thesis.

Stephen Voorwinde

In a similar vein, Voorwinde has written a book entitled, *Jesus' Emotions in the Gospels*, printed in 2011,²⁹³ and he is most interested in analyzing Jesus' emotions versus his actions, rather than identifying the role that emotions may play. Little emotions theory is presented, yet Voorwinde makes interesting connections and draws reasonable conclusions.

Benjamin Warfield

One of the best writers concerning emotion and theology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is Warfield.²⁹⁴ Published in 1912, and entitled, *On the Emotional Life of Our Lord*, Warfield's sixty-page essay's purpose is to prove that God has an emotional side to his nature, and that humanity, created in God's image, therefore also has an important emotional side. Despite its date of publication, this book still has an important contribution to make concerning today's understanding

²⁹² Op. Cit., Mark Lewis Horst. Underlining and brackets mine.

²⁹³ Stephen Voorwinde.

²⁹⁴ Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, 1851-1921. This essay may also be found in Warfield's book, *The Person and Work of Christ*, 1950, 91-145.

of emotion. Emotion is an important aspect of many of Warfield's books, which fact singles out Warfield from among the general population of Christian writers as either being somewhat eccentric or else well ahead of his time; this writer believes the latter is true.

Emotion Seldom Considered

In performing a review of the formidable quantity of theological literature available since the Reformation, the lack of serious consideration of the emotional side of humanity is striking. Second, this overall lack makes the writings of the Wesley brothers stand out all the more because they both do have a great deal to say concerning emotion - provided the researcher can translate Wesley's eighteenth-century emotion terms and references into today's vernacular, and provided that the researcher has suitable psychological and neuroscientific theory to aid in that translation. For example, Damasio, a highly respected neuroscientist, provides the perfect tool that is needed in order to understand the differences and similarities between emotions and feelings, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter.²⁹⁵

Critical Sources

One important resource is the sizeable volume of Wesleyan material gathered by Kimbrough, particularly with regard to the poet of Methodism, Charles Wesley, material such as *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley, A Reader* (2013, expanded ed.); *Charles Wesley, Poet and Theologian* (1992); *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* (1988-1992, 3 vols.); *Orthodoxy and Wesleyan Spirituality* (2002);²⁹⁶ and *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.* (2007-2008, Kimbrough and Newport, 2 vols.).²⁹⁷

Another resource of inestimable value in writing this thesis is *The Bicentennial Edition of The Works of John Wesley* (BCE), a critical edition initially under the overall direction of Frank Baker that began publication of its first volume (7) in 1983; this project still has several more volumes yet to be published.

Donald Schön

Donald A. Schön's²⁹⁸ 1983 book, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, provides important guidance that is needed in order to

²⁹⁵ Antonio Damasio (1944-).

²⁹⁶ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., critical editions.

²⁹⁷ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, a critical edition.

²⁹⁸ Schön (1930-1997) is "a leading M.I.T. social scientist and consultant," *The Reflective Practitioner*, back cover.

use reflection on texts in a consistent manner. Although Schön wrote in 1983, as late as 2014 current recognized experts acknowledge that his classic book remains the standard by which the effectiveness of reflective/interpretive inquiry is to be judged.

Richard Heitzenrater

Concerning the practice of interpretive reflection with respect to textual research, Heitzenrater succinctly states the relationship and importance between research and reflection:

Discovery and reflection together...are the lifeblood of the historian. Discovery is the first task of the historical researcher... reflection is the first task of the historical interpreter.”²⁹⁹
Without discovery, reflection has no factual basis upon which to proceed; without reflection, discovery has no significance or importance for the present.³⁰⁰

Thus, for the textual researcher as well as the historical researcher, reflection is the life-blood of their work, because it is only through reflection that a factual basis can be established for analysis, and by which reasonable conclusions can be reached.

²⁹⁹ Richard Heitzenrater, 1989, *Mirror and Memory*, Nashville: Kingswood, 9.
³⁰⁰ Ibid., Rear cover.

Chapter 3

Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents an analysis that investigates some of the major roles played by emotion in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley, as illustrated in their writings.

The Wesleys' Aldersgate Experiences

Bishop Lewis, in his essay, *Aldersgate the Motive Power of the Church*, proclaims: "Aldersgate is a demonstration of the central place of emotion in religion;"³⁰¹ If Lewis is right, then Aldersgate is, indeed, an excellent place to start analysis, beginning with the testimony of the Wesley brothers themselves, because the beliefs and understanding gained, or confirmed, through their Aldersgate experiences will necessarily contribute to the development of their theology. Arguably, the most important *event* in the lives of Charles (May 21, 1738) and John (May 24, 1738) Wesley is each their own personal *Aldersgate Experience*.

This writer uses the well-known metaphor *Aldersgate Experience*, whose definition and meaning is discussed at length in chapter one, to label what the Wesley brothers each, separately, experience on the aforementioned dates, and this experience is certainly transforming, as will be seen. It is true that Charles Wesley was ill and confined to bed at John Bray's house,³⁰² rather than attending a meeting in Aldersgate Street when he had his experience on May 21st; nevertheless, the use of the term *Aldersgate Experience* here provides a useful, simplified, and well-established shorthand notation if one understands that *Experience*, rather than the location *Aldersgate Street*, is the referent.

³⁰¹ See 16, this thesis: Edwin Lewis, 1938, *Aldersgate the Motive Power of the Church*, in "What Happened At Aldersgate," Elmer T. Clark, ed., pp. 80-81.

³⁰² Kimbrough, S. T., Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, eds., 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:101-114. Charles was quite ill when he moved into John Bray's home on May 11, 1738; he remained at the Bray's until perhaps the 3rd of June.

There are nearly as many different *opinions/interpretations* of Wesley's written Aldersgate Experience as there are competent writers on this subject, ranging from, for example, the hagiographic accounts of John Whitehead (1740-1804), John Hampson (1760-1817), Henry Moore (1751-1844), Luke Tyerman (1819-1889), John Telford (1851-1936), and Umphrey Lee (1893-1958); to varying degrees of pejorative interpretation by such writers as Randy Maddox (1953-), Roberta C. Bondi (1990), Jean Miller Schmidt (1990), and the Catholic writer Maximin Piette (1937); to Scandinavian Methodist bishop Ole Bergen (1988). These writers compose only a small fraction of all who have ever opined on John Wesley and/or his Aldersgate Experience; indeed, as was established in chapter one, their interpretations range from *the greatest thing that ever happened to the Church* to *the most disastrous tragedy that ever befell it!*

If the disaster that Bondi, Miller, Schmidt, Maddox, and others perceive in John Wesley's *Aldersgate Experience* were true, then this thesis would be reduced to a mere study of negative emotions; for this reason their collective interpretation is challenged in Chapter One³⁰³ because making a full refutation here would be too distracting for the analysis of the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate Experiences.

So, how does one account for all of these differences of opinion when everyone is reading *the same Wesleyan material*? One answer to this question is provided by the research of a neuroscientist³⁰⁴ who specializes in the study of the *reading* brain. She construes that when one reads, one utilizes a vast host of cognitive or mental processes to facilitate reading, say, John or Charles Wesley's Aldersgate experience, such as "attention; memory; and visual, auditory and linguistic processes." One's "brain's attentional and executive systems" immediately formulate a plan to quickly read and understand the written material. Then, one's visual networks rapidly scan the written page for "letter shapes, word forms, and common phrases" and send this information to "linguistic systems" that are prepared to swiftly process all of these "subtly differentiated visual symbols with essential information about the sounds contained in words." With no conscious awareness of doing so, one then "applies highly automatic rules" concerning "the sound of letters in the English writing system" through the use of innumerable "linguistic processes." By this means,

³⁰³ Chapter 1, pp. 20-29, analyzes and challenges some of the opinions expressed in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 1990, Randy Maddox, ed.

³⁰⁴ Maryanne Wolf, 2007, *Proust and the Squid*.

dubbed “the alphabetic principle,” one’s brain connects and integrates “at rapid-fire speeds what it sees and what it hears *to what it knows*.”³⁰⁵

When all of these rules are applied to reading Wesley’s account, many “relevant language and comprehension processes” are activated with unbelievable speed. Furthermore, one’s semantic (word meaning) systems “contribute every possible meaning of each word” that is read, and then “incorporate[s] the exact correct meaning for each word in its context.”³⁰⁶ Wolf further elaborates:

Years ago, the cognitive scientist David Swinney helped uncover the fact that when we read a simple word like “bug,” we activate not only the more common meaning (a crawling, six-legged creature), but also the bug’s less frequent associations - spies, Volkswagens, and glitches in software. Swinney discovered that the brain doesn’t find just one simple meaning for a word; instead it stimulates a veritable trove of knowledge about that word and the many words related to it. The richness of this semantic dimension of reading depends on the riches we have already stored, a fact with important and sometimes devastating developmental implications for our children. Children with a rich repertoire of words and their associations will experience any text or any conversation in ways that are substantively different from children who do not have the same stored words and concepts.³⁰⁷

Wolf continues this line of reasoning by adding that “we bring our entire store of meanings to whatever we read.” In applying this discovery to reading Wesley’s Aldersgate Experience,

it means that your executive planning system directed a great many activities to ensure that you comprehended what was there, *and [also] retrieved all [of] your personal associations to the text*. Your grammatical system had to work overtime to avoid stumbling over [Wesley’s antiquated, even cross-cultural, expressions, grammar, and punctuation]. To accomplish all this without forgetting what you already read fifty words back, your semantic and grammatical systems had to function closely with your working memory (think of this type of memory as a kind of “cognitive blackboard,” which temporarily stores information for you to use in the near term). [Wesley’s cross-cultural language] had to be connected to the meanings of individual words without losing track of the overall propositions and context of the passage.

As you linked all this linguistic and conceptual information, *you generated your own inferences and hypotheses based on your own background knowledge and engagement*. If this cumulative information failed to make sense, you might have reread some parts to ensure that they fit within the given context. Then, *after you integrated all this visual, conceptual, and linguistic information with your background knowledge and inferences*, you arrived at an understanding of what [Wesley] was describing [, and do so nearly instantly].³⁰⁸

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 8. Italics are mine, and emphasize the fact that personal attitudes and emotions affects how one interprets any passage.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 8.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 9. Parenthesis is Wolf’s.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 9-10. Italics are mine to emphasize that personal bias is an important factor in reading any text. Parentheses are Wolf’s; brackets are mine.

Two points need emphasis: first, in reading any single word, Wolf is saying that, in an instant, the reader's mind calls up every definition of that word which is known by that particular reader, and then non-consciously selects the best - at least in the reader's mind - definition. It is exactly at this point that Bundi and her associates may have first gone astray in their definition of the word "simple;" simply put, Wesley's definition and usage of this word was not likely in their mental list of definitional choices.

Second, in reading any passage, one's background "knowledge" and "engagement" engender "inferences" and "hypotheses," which lead to understanding. One's feelings and emotions, one's *preferences*, are an inseparable part of one's background knowledge, and are roughly proportional to the emotional charge contained within the passage. Thus, it is hardly surprising that a reader who may have negative emotions about some Pentecostal practices, or even perhaps the idea of Pentecost, would have a negative viewpoint of Wesley's emotionally charged Aldersgate, or Pentecostal, experience.³⁰⁹

Damasio writes that *recognizing* the "pervasive" role of emotion in one's decision-making process can provide opportunity to enhance the positive and lessen "their potential harm," that is, the harm one's negative emotions, one's biases, can contribute to *hindering right understanding*. Interestingly, Damasio continues:

Specifically, without diminishing the orienting value of normal feelings [or emotions], one would want to protect reason from the weakness that *abnormal* feelings [or emotions,] or the manipulation of normal feelings [or emotions] can introduce in the process of [decision-making].

I do not believe that *knowledge* about *feelings* [and *emotions*] should make us less inclined to empirical verification. I only see that greater knowledge about the physiology of emotion and feeling should make us more aware of the pitfalls of scientific observation.³¹⁰

Here, Damasio is saying that one's emotions can either hinder or enhance one's understanding of any text that is read, depending on whether or not one is aware of one's feelings and emotions as one reads. Two more significant points present themselves here. On the one hand, Damasio is discussing feelings and emotion, including knowledge, and *abnormal* feelings, and emotion, in general terms, and he stresses the importance of the need for self-awareness of one's emotional state.

³⁰⁹ Maryanne Wolf, 2007, *Proust and the Squid*, p. 10.

³¹⁰ Antonio Damasio, 1994, *Descartes' Error*, p. 246. Italics and brackets are mine.

On the other hand, it is germane to this discussion to personalize his wording in the second paragraph, while fully maintaining Damasio's intended meaning:

I do not believe that *knowledge* about [one's own] *feelings [and emotions]* should make [one] less inclined to empirical verification. I only see that greater knowledge about [one's own] physiology of emotion and feeling should make [one] more aware of the pitfalls of scientific [i.e., principled] observation.³¹¹

This second statement succinctly captures the importance of knowing one's self, of recognizing the presence of one's *emotions*, and the role played by one's own emotions, as decision-making/theological interpretation proceeds.

A preliminary Conclusion

One of the most important roles of emotion in Wesley's theology involves the emotional likes and dislikes, or biases, which *the reader* brings to a Wesleyan text, because said bias will necessarily influence the reader's interpretation of that text; indeed, this fact explains how different readers can come up with different, even contradictory, interpretations of any particular text, on a continuum ranging from the hagiographical to the pejorative. Setting aside one's biases is usually not possible, because these biases (negative or positive) operate mainly on the non-conscious level of the brain/mind.

It is completely normal for people to develop likes and dislikes, or biases, during their lifetimes; but, part of self-awareness includes developing an awareness of these biases, and herein lies the solution to the problem of dealing with biases. When interpreting texts, interpreters must be cognizant of their biases or emotional preferences, and recognize the role that is played by their own emotions that may be associated with the text so that sound judgments can be rendered or at least so that no harm is done that would *hinder* a correct understanding of the passage in question. Thus, the role of the emotional bias of the reader becomes an important factor of textual interpretation.

So, the question remains: what really happened to the Wesley brothers on the aforementioned dates, and what role, if any, did emotion play in their soteriology concerning this experience? To answer these questions, the same evidence that was available to previous examiners will be re-examined.³¹²

³¹¹ Ibid., italics and brackets are mine.

³¹² To be fair, critical editions that have only recently become available, such as Kimbrough and Newport's *Journal of Charles Wesley*, 2008; Newport's *Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001; and, most

Charles Wesley's Aldersgate Experience

Is Charles Wesley's Aldersgate Experience pertinent to understanding his brother's experience? This writer claims that it is germane, because, as Collins had also noted³¹³ concerning Rattenbury's remarks in his book *The Conversion of the Wesleys*, that Charles's experience, which occurred three days before John's, were similar. Collins concludes, and this writer had independently reached the same conclusion, that

if John and Charles' religious experiences were indeed parallel [i.e., similar], as Rattenbury contends, and if Charles referred to his experience as a *conversion* then the same term may be suitably applied to John's experience as well.³¹⁴

Furthermore, Rattenbury claims that Charles's Journal records "many more references" than are found in John's Journal with respect to their "conversion experience[s]", and that Charles's hymns are "rich in autobiographical details" concerning his "conversion."³¹⁵ The poet of Methodism bequeathed many thousands of poems and hymns to the Church, and because poetry and music are the language of emotion, he also left many emotional clues that can greatly further the goal of this thesis. Thus, an examination of Charles's Aldersgate experience can be quite helpful in understanding John's experience; therefore Charles's experience will be examined first.

Charles, in his Journal, begins his entry for his day of blessing, May 21st, 1738, with the banner:

The Day Of Pentecost [Whitsunday]
Sunday, May 21, 1738

...I ... felt in the meantime a strange palpitation of heart, I said, yet feared to say, "I believe, I believe!"
... Still I felt a violent opposition and reluctance to believe. Yet still the Spirit of God strove with my own and the evil spirit, till by degrees he chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced - I knew not how, nor when - and immediately fell to intercession.³¹⁶

importantly, BCE, 1984 to present; and other recent critical editions of various Wesleyan material have provided a decided advantage for this writer.

³¹³ Kenneth Collins, 1989, *Wesley's Aldersgate Experience: Coherence or Confusion*, in *The Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol 24, 18-31.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

³¹⁵ J. Ernest Rattenbury, 1938, *The Conversion of the Wesleys*, 25.

³¹⁶ Kimbrough, S. T., Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, eds., 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:106-107. Brackets are mine.

This brief summary, taken from Charles's Journal entry, depicts the climax of the great internal emotional struggle he is experiencing on this day: a fierce battle between belief and unbelief, between God and Charles's own spirit which is aided by the evil spirit. The faith he struggles to receive from God, "by degrees," becomes tangible to him; in other words, his faith has substance in that it is *felt*, and reminds this writer of the faith expressed by the author of the letter to the Hebrews (11:1). In his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, John Wesley discusses this Scripture reference and the definition of faith found therein, and he says that

*faith is the subsistence of things hoped for, the evidence or conviction of things not seen... The subsistence of things hoped for – giving a kind of present subsistence to the good things which God has promised – the divine, supernatural evidence exhibited to, the conviction hereby produced in, a believer of things not seen – whether past, future, or spiritual; particularly of God and the things of God.*³¹⁷

In order to rightly understand what John wrote here, it becomes necessary to grasp the meaning of his words as the Wesley brothers, themselves, understood them. Fortunately, John leaves abundant written definitions in his dictionaries, and in Johnson's dictionary which Wesley endorsed as was shown in chapter one. The first odd word in the above paragraph from Wesley is *subsistence*, for many other versions use *substance*. In his *Preface to Notes Upon the New Testament* (1755) he writes:

4. In order to assist these [unlettered men] in such a measure as I am able, I design first to set down the text itself, in the common *English* Translation, which is in general (so far as I can judge) abundantly the best that I have seen. Yet I do not say, it is incapable of being brought in several places nearer to the original. Neither will I affirm, that the *Greek* copies from which this translation was made, are always the most correct. And therefore I shall take the liberty, as occasion may require, to make here and there a small alteration.

Wesley's use of the word "subsistence" in his biblical text for Hebrews 11:1 is an example of such an "alteration" and Wesley defines this word as "being, continuance, maintenance."³¹⁸ Johnson defines subsistence as "1. Real being. 2. Competence; means of supporting life."³¹⁹ The Authorized Version uses the word "substance," and Wesley leaves it to Johnson to provide the definitions for this word, which include "1. Being. Davies. 4. Something real, not imaginary; something solid, not empty. Dryden."

³¹⁷ *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, 1755, first Ed., Hebrews 11:1. Wesley repeats his entire exposition in his 3rd ed. of 1760-62 (Vol. 3), verbatim. Italics are Wesley's.

³¹⁸ Ibid., "subsistence."

³¹⁹ Samuel Johnson, 1756, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 2.

It is clear that Wesley's intent by using the word "subsistence" is to declare the reality of faith; faith is something that is real and that can, indeed, therefore, be... felt.. emotionally. Indeed, Charles, in his Journal entry for August 17, 1738, records the testimony given by one of his recent converts:

Thursday, August 17. Preached faith to a dying woman and administered the Sacrament. She was satisfied God had sent us, told me I was the instrument of saving her soul... Mrs. Brockmer... asked me to go and see the sick woman again. Preached faith to a large company I found there. The [sick] woman bore a noble testimony. I asked her before them all: "Have you received forgiveness?" Her answer was, "Yes, I am assured of it by Christ himself." To them she said, they must not *think* they believe, but *feel* it, and have a full confidence thereof. They all thanked me much.³²⁰

Here, Charles is affirming the reality of faith, a faith that can be, in twenty-first century parlance, *emotionally felt*, as he rightly taught the dying woman; the feeling expressed by Charles in his *Journal* entry will become an integral part of the Wesley brothers' doctrine of assurance, which will be discussed later. John's dictionary omits the word "feel," but Johnson provides several definitions of "feel," including the idea of "perception," "[having] a sense of pain or pleasure," "sensibility, tenderness;" and "feeling" as "expressive of great sensibility."³²¹ Johnson defines "sensibility" as "quickness of sensation or perception;" "quickness," according to Johnson, here means "keen sensibility." Today, "feel" can mean "to experience something physical or emotional."³²² Here, John, and indirectly also Charles in the quote above, by accepting Johnson's definition³²³ of the word *feel*, which includes the idea of *perception*, is using a principle of, what is called in twenty-first-century language, the cognitive theory of emotion; this connection further strengthens the integrity of this writer's investigation of the role of emotion in the Wesley brothers' soteriology.

Findlay, in his book, *Christ's Standard Bearer: A Study in the Hymns of Charles Wesley*, has written the clearest explanation, from a theological viewpoint, which this writer has found to date of what the Wesley brothers mean when they use the word *feel*, for example, in Charles's hymns, or in their soteriology.³²⁴ In Charles's

³²⁰ Kimbrough and Newport, 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:143. Italics are Wesley's, brackets are mine.

³²¹ Samuel Johnson, 1756, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Vol. 1.

³²² Cambridge Dictionary, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/feel>, accessed 21 June, 2017.

³²³ John Wesley's acceptance of Samuel Johnson's dictionary was established in chapter one.

³²⁴ Op. Cit., George H. Findlay (1882-1969), 39-46.

great hymn, *O for a thousand tongues to Sing*, he writes in the first two lines of verse eighteen:

With me, your chief, ye then shall *know*,
Shall feel your sins forgiven;³²⁵

Charles has written the word *know* in italics in order to emphasize the awesome meaning of these lines, an exclamation mark so to speak, for it was no small thing in his day, or, generally, in our day also, to *know* that one is forgiven and saved from damnation. Line one contains the admission that he, Charles, considers himself to be the “chief” of sinners, now forgiven, and by this confession he offers hope to even the vilest of sinners.

Findlay ties two of Charles’s favorite verbs together, namely *feel* and *prove*, in his discussion of Charles’s intended meaning of these verbs, as Charles represents himself as a “standard bearer” of Christ through his poetry and sermons. Findlay understands Charles’s concept that “intellectual apprehension and assent” of the Gospel is not enough;³²⁶ one “must feel its truth and applicability to [one’s] own case... [one] must prove... the Gospel by feeling” it. And the truth of this Gospel can only be proven as one feels it, “that is, realize it for [oneself].”³²⁷ But, how do we perceive this knowledge of God’s active work in us? By what means do, or can, we know we have been forgiven and cleansed? Charles is saying that he now *feels* God’s peace, but how is this peace felt or sensed?

Findlay realizes that this peace of which Charles writes is inwardly felt, and that it is not, as Wesley’s enemies would claim,³²⁸ brought about by “emotion intensified by mass hysteria;”³²⁹ or, in other words, this feeling does not originate in eighteenth-century enthusiasm (fanaticism). Indeed, at this point of the discussion, one might object to the validity of using feelings at all, and make that claim that feelings are not emotions and therefore are not relevant. But is this statement true?

Damasio (1944-), a medical doctor, brain surgeon, and cognitivist neuroscientist, presents an excellent and learned discussion concerning the difference between

³²⁵ John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, 1749, *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 2:220-222. Italics are the Wesley brothers’.

³²⁶ John Wesley, cf., Sermon 7: *The Way to the Kingdom*, BCE 1: 230 [Sect. II.10].

³²⁷ George H. Findlay, *Christ’s Standard Bearer*, 39-40.

³²⁸ Cf. George Croft (1747-1809), 1795, *Thoughts Concerning the Methodists and the Established Clergy*; Richard Graves (1715-1804), 1774, 2 vols., *The Spiritual Quixote: or, the Summer’s Ramble of Mr. Geoffry Wildgoose, a Comic Romance*, a book dedicated to unjustly skewering the perceived enthusiasm of the Methodists. Many other anti-Methodist books could be cited.

³²⁹ Findlay, *Christ’s Standard Bearer*, 40.

emotions and feelings: a response to an emotional experience that is directed inward is called a feeling; the emotional response to that same experience which is directed outward is called an emotion. Damasio continues:

The human impact of all the above causes of emotion, refined and not so refined, and of all the shades of emotion they induce, subtle and not so subtle, depends on the feelings engendered by those emotions. It is through feelings, which are inwardly directed and private, that emotions, which are outwardly directed and public, begin their impact on the mind; but the full and lasting impact of feelings requires consciousness, because only along with the advent of a sense of self do feelings become known to the individual having them.³³⁰

I have proposed that the term *feeling* should be reserved for the private, mental experience of an emotion, while the term *emotion* should be used to designate the collection of responses, many of which are publicly observable.³³¹

First, this reference points out that a “sense of self,” or self-awareness is necessary in order for one to become aware of one’s feelings, and the Wesley brothers and Fletcher certainly possessed self-awareness; one of the aspects of maturity is self-awareness, or in Wesley’s parlance, “self-knowledge.”³³² Second, Damasio not only supports Pessoa’s concept of a cognitive-emotional continuum, but he had also developed a similar concept concerning an emotions-feelings continuum. While Damasio’s interests lie in the relationship between consciousness and emotions-feelings, his comments on an emotions-feelings continuum can be quite helpful in understanding the role of emotion in Wesley’s theology, particularly with the Wesley brothers’ use of the word feel/feelings. Damasio further writes, and his footnote 6 is included in this citation:

[E]motions occur in a setting of consciousness. We can feel our emotions consistently and we know we feel them. The fabric of our minds and of our behavior is woven around continuous cycles of emotions followed by feelings that become known and beget new emotions, a running polyphony that underscores and punctuates specific thoughts in our minds and actions in our behavior. But although emotion and feeling are now part of a functional continuum, it is helpful to distinguish the steps along that continuum if we are to study their biological underpinnings with any degree of success. Besides, as suggested earlier, it is possible that feelings are poised at the very threshold that separates being from knowing, and thus have a privileged connection to consciousness.⁶ [Damasio footnote ref.]

⁶ [Damasio footnote] Other languages that have conveyed the heritage of Western philosophy and psychology have long had available the equivalent of the separate English words *emotion* and *feeling*. For example: Latin: *exmovere* and *sentire*; French: *émotion* and

³³⁰ Antonio Damasio (1944-), 1999, *The Feeling of What Happens, Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, 36. Here, I am not concerned with the “above causes of emotion,” but with the relationship between emotions and feelings.

³³¹ Ibid., 42, italics are Damasio’s.

³³² Cf., Sermon 21: *Upon Our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, Discourse the First*, BCE 1:

sentiment; German: *Emotionen* and *Gefühl*; Portuguese: *emoção* and *sentimento*; Italian: *emozione* and *sentimento*, and so on. The two words were probably coined in those several languages because many clear-eyed observers, as they considered the two distinguishable sets of phenomena, sensed their separation and saw the value of denoting them by different terms. Referring to the whole process by the single word *emotion*, as is now common practice, is pure carelessness. Nor should it be forgotten that in its more general meaning the word *feeling* denotes perceptions related to the body – feelings of malaise or well-being, feelings of pain, the feeling of something touched – rather than an appreciation of what is seen or heard. The wise coiners of the word *feeling* were probably under the correct impression that feeling an emotion had a lot to do with the body, and they were right on the mark.³³³

Damasio's footnote 6 contains much valuable information concerning the relationship between emotions and feelings, for both are generated in response to an emotional experience. He rightly laments the conflation of emotion and feelings in his footnote, a commingling of terms that was initially accomplished by Brown (1778-1820) through the publication of his four-volume magnum opus in 1820, *Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind*.³³⁴

With this information in mind, one can better understand, say, Charles Wesley's Aldersgate experience, which is, in Wesleyan soteriology, a direct encounter with God; an encounter that is realized, or made real, through an emotional experience with God that produces both "feelings, which are inwardly directed and private,"³³⁵ and "emotions, which are outwardly directed and public:" these resulting feelings and emotions all stem from the one-and-the-same emotional experience: feelings are emotional in nature; feelings and emotions are only opposite sides of the same coin. Just as emotions are real, so are feelings, for both stem from the same experience.

James (1842-1910) says that a single emotional experience may result in feelings, or emotions, or both, such as, say, "religious fear, religious love, religious awe, [or] religious joy," but these emotions and feelings are "only man's natural emotion of love, [fear, awe, or joy] directed to a religious object,"³³⁶ in this case God. James has been assailed by a number of psychologists today as outdated, but his statement stressing what was said in the introductory chapter concerning the avoidance of using *theological definitions*, or, *theological lexicography*, to redefine ordinary words is correct. What is usually required, as was exhaustively shown in Chapter

³³³ Damasio (1944-), 1999, *The Feeling of What Happens*, 43, 340. Italics are Damasio's, Underlining is mine.

³³⁴ Op. Cit., Thomas Brown (1778-1820).

³³⁵ Damasio, 1999, *The Feeling of What Happens*, 36.

³³⁶ William James, 1902, *The Varieties of Religious Experience, A Study in Human Nature*, 27.

One, is an adjective that precedes this word, say, love, to describe to what, or whom, this love is directed.

Therefore, when Charles stresses the importance of feelings, as he does so many times throughout his poetry and prose, he is referring to an honest, and true, and real experience that is sensed through, or by, means of his emotional system. A feeling is always directed inward in such a way that it is really felt, through one's emotional faculties, and often can be a very moving experience, such as that which Charles experiences on his day of Pentecost.

The third quote on this paper's frontispiece was written by a very wise man. He said:

I have come to realize that pure reason is unqualified to penetrate the mystery of God's light, and may, indeed, if too fondly indulged, interpose an impenetrable veil between the heart and God.

A. J. Arberry³³⁷

The "heart" to which Arberry refers is one's emotions or feelings, or both. Second, he is not saying that reason plays no part in "penetrating the mystery of God's light," but that emotion, as well as reason, is needed. In extending this thought, it occurs to this writer that, normally, when God speaks to anyone he does so through one's feelings and emotional systems. Feelings and emotions provide the channel through which God usually communicates with anyone; one's emotional faculties perceive the reality of a felt experience, but one's reason is needed to make sense out of that experience. Charles Wesley provides a perfect example of this method of divine communication, which example will be thoroughly examined.

In the pages following, some of the *negative feelings* that Charles experiences will be examined, strong *feelings* such as despair as he tries to access God through illegitimate means such as self-righteousness. His friends can sense and see his *emotions* as he becomes *emotionally* distraught. These two statements are but opposite sides of the same coin: both *feelings* and *emotions* can be produced by the same emotional experience. Conversely, Charles's positive emotional experiences will also be examined, both experiences that are expressed as internal private feelings, as well as his externally observable emotions, while remembering that one's internal feelings are usually the source of one's externally observable emotions.

³³⁷ A. J. Arberry, 1979, *Mystical Poems of Rumi 2: Second Selection, Poems 201-400*, "An Autobiographical Sketch by the Late Professor A. J. Arberry," ix.

A Closer look at Charles's Aldersgate Experience

Charles makes the declaration in his *Journal* that when his faith had sufficiently grown, “by degrees,” that he finds himself “convinced [that I have received the promise for which, earlier in the day, I had asked].”³³⁸ What was his earlier request to God? In Charles's own words, at about 9:30 o'clock that morning he made this earnest plea to God:

I waked in hope and expectation of his coming. At nine my brother and some friends came and sang an hymn to the Holy Ghost. My comfort and hope were hereby increased. In about half an hour they went. I betook myself to prayer; the substance as follows: “O Jesus, thou hast said, I will come unto you. Thou hast said, I will send the Comforter to you. My father and I will come unto you, and make our abode with you. Thou art God who canst not lie. I wholly rely upon thy most true promise. Accomplish it in thy time and manner.”³³⁹

In this prayer, Charles is asking for Jesus and the Holy Spirit to come to him and abide with him, and for Jesus and his Father to abide with him; he now, finally, wholly relies only upon God's promise to do just that. Charles's language, particularly his use of the word abide, is reminiscent of that recorded in the book of John 15:1-9, wherein Jesus is the vine and Christians are the branches, and where it is implied that God will abide, that is, live in us even as we live in God.

John plainly refers to his brother's Aldersgate experience, although not by name, in his *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* when he writes his note for the passage in the book of Matthew, 3.11:

11. *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire* – He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love which many waters cannot quench. And this was done, even with a visible appearance as of fire, on the day of Pentecost.³⁴⁰

One can see that Charles is asking for his own Aldersgate experience, that is, his own Aldersgate experience built upon a solid, biblical understanding – in other words, it is *evangelical* - at a time that would occur later that same evening; the manner is through his lay-friends attending him as he lay upon his sick-bed. His response is, after intense spiritual struggle in trying to let go of all sources of help except his trust in God, that he felt “a strange palpitation of [his] heart,” and then said, “I believe, I believe!” The biblical promise was, that after God came to abide

³³⁸ Kimbrough and Newport, 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:107.

³³⁹ Ibid., 1:106.

³⁴⁰ Italics are Wesley's.

with him,³⁴¹ his ministry would become most fruitful, and indeed, so it was. His brother, John, defines fruitful as “convert[ing] sinners,” for that is the ultimate goal of the one who is made holy when Jesus lives in one through his Holy Spirit.³⁴²

What has just happened to Charles? How has this experience come about? When, if at all, does Charles’s emotions come into play concerning his own Aldersgate experience and what might be their role? Two emotions emerge in this section: first, the presence of the Holy Spirit *in* Charles was *felt*, or sensed emotionally and physically - his heart rate increased due to heightened emotion; second, his heart was *inflamed with the fire of love*, and this phrase is obviously very emotionally charged by qualifying love with the words *inflamed* and *fire*, words that account for his racing heartbeat. John Wesley, in his exposition of the passage in the book of Matthew, was certainly aware of the fact that fire is one of the symbols representing the Holy Spirit; without doubt Charles was also aware of this fact. What action, if any, does Charles take just after his Aldersgate experience? He “immediately fell to intercession,” an action suggesting that his heart was truly “*inflamed with the fire of love*” for others.

Charles’s evidence is only *prima facie*, and later John Wesley took great pains to clarify his theological position by publishing at least four sermons dealing with assurance,³⁴³ and by publishing *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* (1745) in order to defend himself against the charge of enthusiasm.³⁴⁴

What occurs the day after Charles’s Aldersgate experience? He leaves an important, but often missed clue concerning Psalm 107 in his diary that can lend significant aid in interpreting his Aldersgate Experience story:

Monday, May 22 [, 1738]. Under his protection I waked next morning and rejoiced in reading the 107 Psalm, *so nobly describing what God had done for my soul* [in bringing me, yesterday, through my own Pentecostal [i.e., Aldersgate] experience].³⁴⁵

³⁴¹ Cf., John 15:5.

³⁴² Ibid., cf. v. 16. Also see the story of the baptism of Jesus, found in all four gospels.

³⁴³ Sermons 10 (1746), 11 (1767), 12 (1746), and 105 (1788), BCE, Appendix F, 4:548-554.

³⁴⁴ E.g., see Bishop George Lavington, *The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists Compared*, 1749, London. Albert Outler’s introductory comment for sermons 10-11 includes a brief analysis of Wesley’s response (*A Farther Appeal*, and the aforementioned sermons) to such antagonists as archbishop Thomas Herring, bishop Edmund Gibson, and bishop Richard Smallbroke concerning their charge, against Wesley, of enthusiasm, in BCE 1: 267-69.

³⁴⁵ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport: *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley*, 1:108. Italics and brackets mine.

Remarkably, Charles claims that Psalm 107 *so nobly describ[es]* his Aldersgate experience. Since Wesley does not include the word noble or nobly in his dictionary, Johnson supplies the necessary meaning for this eighteenth-century word: greatly, illustriously, grandly, splendidly.³⁴⁶ In Charles's own words, Psalm 107 splendidly, or *perfectly*, delineates his Aldersgate experience. This phrase is, therefore, no small clue; indeed, Psalm 107 can become the key to unlocking the meaning(s) behind his struggle during whatever it was that Charles experienced on May 21st, 1738; but will this claim prove to be true?

Interestingly, Baker (1910-1999), when referring to Charles's experience on "Whitsunday, 21st May 1738," whereby "his inner conflict was at last decided,"³⁴⁷ quotes from Wesley's Journal:

I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. . . . I saw that by faith I stood; by the continual support of faith, which kept me from falling, though of myself I am ever sinking into sin.³⁴⁸

But what is even more interesting is that Baker's explanatory citation ends just three sentences before Charles's entry of Monday, May 22nd, quoted above, wherein Charles points to the 107th Psalm to explain *what* had "so nobly" happened to him on the previous day. Strangely, I have yet to find a Wesleyan Scholar who takes advantage of Charles's referral to Psalm 107, although several writers³⁴⁹ who opine upon the Wesley brothers Aldersgate Experiences make reference to the same page of Charles's *Journal* as does Baker.

Rattenbury (1870-1963) published his critical study of the Wesley brothers' evangelical conversion in 1938, entitled, *The Conversion of the Wesleys, a Critical Study*, yet this fine scholar also misses Charles's diary clue of May 22nd. The only citation that Rattenbury makes from Charles's Journal for May 22, 1738, is merely the opening phrase of the sentence that begins the next paragraph after that which contains Charles's reference to Psalm 107.

³⁴⁶ Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1756, vol. 2, "nobly."

³⁴⁷ Frank Baker (1910-1999), 1948, *Charles Wesley As Revealed by His Letters*.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 1:108. Although I cite Kimbrough and Newport's 2008 critical ed. of Charles Wesley's Journal, this source was not available to Baker in 1948. Baker must have used Jackson's Ed. of *The Journal of Charles Wesley, 1849*. The wording and punctuation of these two sources are identical.

³⁴⁹ To name but a few of these writers, cf. Maddox, Bondi, Watson, Heitzenrater, Runyan, Schmidt, and Gunter in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*; Clark, Cram, Lee, etc., in *What Happened at Aldersgate*; Kenneth Collins, *Wesley's Aldersgate Experience: Coherence or Confusion?*, in "The Wesleyan Theological Journal," Vol. 24, 1989.

Another example is provided by Lawson, who, in his *The Conversion of the Wesleys – 1738 Reconsidered*,³⁵⁰ quotes extensively from Charles's Journal as he *reconsiders* the event and meaning of the Wesley brothers' conversions, and who cites lengthy entries from Charles's May 21st and 23rd *Journal* entries, but entirely skips entries from May 22nd, the day when Charles penned his reference to the 107th Psalm.

Outler states³⁵¹ that Charles's

evangelical conversion had preceded his brother's, either on May 3, 1738 (when 'it pleased God to open his eyes so that he saw clearly what was the nature of [saving] faith . . .'), or on May 19 (when he 'had found rest to his soul').⁷ [Outler's footnote:]

⁷ [Outler's footnote:] Cf., both CWJ and JWJ for these dates and experiences.

However, Charles's Journal lacks any entry for May 3rd, 1738, and his May 19th entry, though quite lengthy, does not contain an indication he has received his heart's desire for the peace for which he so ardently strives. Indeed, Charles closes his entry for May 19th with these words:

[Wesley:] "Then are you willing to die?"

[Mrs Turner:] "I am, and would be glad to die this moment. For I know all my sins are blotted out. The handwriting that was against me is taken out of the way and nailed to his cross. He has saved me by his death. He has washed me with his blood. He has hid me in his wounds. I have peace in him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Her answers were so full to these and the most searching questions I could ask, that I had no doubt of her having received the atonement, and waited for it myself with a more assured hope. Feeling an anticipation of joy upon her account, and thanking Christ as I could, I looked for him all night with prayers and sighs and unceasing desires.³⁵²

John's Journal also fails to produce evidence to support Outler's claim. John writes:

Wed. 3. [May, 1738] My brother had a long and particular conversation with Peter Böhler. And it now pleased God to open his eyes, so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one, true, living faith, whereby alone 'through grace we are saved'.³⁵³

What is perplexing about Outler's claims is that he undoubtedly knew that Charles understood that evangelical conversion meant not merely to understand certain theological points (for even demons understand...), but to know, that is, *to experience* the things recorded, above, for instance, in Mrs. Turner's confession: my

³⁵⁰ Op. cit., John Lawson, *The Asbury Theological Journal*, Fall 1988, 7-44.

³⁵¹ Albert C. Outler, ed., BCE, 1:111-112. Parentheses and brackets are Outler's.

³⁵² S. T. Kimbrough, 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:105.

³⁵³ John Wesley, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., BCE: *The Works of John Wesley*, "Journals and Diaries," 18:237.

sins are forgiven, he has “saved me from death, and washed me in his blood; I have peace in him, and rejoice!”

Outler’s reference to May 19th is even more perplexing. John writes in his Journal:

Fri. 19 [, May, 1738] My brother [Charles] had a second return of his pleurisy. A few of us spent Saturday night in prayer. The next day, being Whitsunday, after hearing Dr. Heylin [John Heylin, 1685-1759] preach a truly Christian sermon (on ‘They were all filled with the Holy Ghost’ – and so, said he, may all you be, if it is not your own fault), and assisting him at the Holy Communion (his curate being taken ill in the church), I received the surprising news that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour. ‘Who is so great a God as our God?’³⁵⁴

Therefore, there can be no doubt as to the day of Charles’s Aldersgate experience; it was on Whitsunday, May 21, 1738, and if doubt still exists, Charles’s reference, made on May 22nd, to Psalm 107 should remove all doubt: Charles, indeed, “found rest to his soul.”

Analysis of Charles Wesley’s Aldersgate Experience

What is the role of emotion in Charles’s Aldersgate experience, and how does, or can, a study concerning the aspect of emotion in his experience contribute to the spiritual growth and theological development of twenty-first century Christians? How does this Psalm from the BCP relate to Charles’s emotional experience? Where does this Psalm fit in Wesleyan theology today with respect to emotion? Where is a good place to begin an investigation of Charles’s evangelical conversion? What really occurred on Charles’s day of great blessing?

A fact often overlooked by most Wesleyan scholars is that Charles plainly states in his Journal the next day, May 22nd, that the 1662 BCP Psalm 107 of the Authorized Version *so nobly* describes his Aldersgate experience of May 21st, making this Psalm an important key with which to unlock the role(s) of emotion in his Aldersgate experience, and the importance of Psalm 107 gains additional stature because it has been neglected by virtually all of the major Wesleyan scholars.

Even more interesting, as will soon be seen, is the fact that Charles finished his own poetic version of most of the Psalms prior to 1750, a version that includes Psalm 107; Charles’s version corresponds well to that of the BCP on a verse-by-verse comparison with the caveat that while the Authorized Version of Psalm 107 considers the physical realm within the context of Old Testament Israelites,

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 18:241. Brackets and underlining are mine.

Charles's version of this same Psalm contemplates the spiritual sphere of the New Testament believer, and his own experience in particular. These aforementioned facts suggest that here, beginning with the BCP Psalm 107, is a good place to begin analysis.

Psalm 107, from the 1662 BCP, Analysis

The entirety of this Psalm will be considered as a single unit of text.

Confitemini Domino [Praise the Lord] **Psalm cvii.** ³⁵⁵

O Give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious: and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed: and delivered from the hand of the enemy;

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west: from the north, and from the south.

4 They went astray in the wilderness out of the way: and found no city to dwell in;

5 Hungry and thirsty: their soul fainted in them.

6 So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble: and he delivered them from their distress.

7 He led them forth by the right way: that they might go to the city where they dwelt.

8 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness: and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men;

9 For he satisfieth the empty soul: and filleth the hungry soul with goodness;

10 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death: being fast bound in misery and iron.

11 Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord: and lightly regarded the counsel of the most Highest;

12 He also brought down their heart through heaviness: they fell down, and there was none to help them.

13 So, when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble: he delivered them out of their distress.

14 For he brought them out of darkness, and out of the shadow of death: and brake their bonds in sunder.

15 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness: and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

16 For he hath broken the gates of brass: and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Foolish men are plagued for their offence: and because of their wickedness.

18 Their soul abhorred all manner of meat: and they were even hard at deaths door.

19 So when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble: he delivered them out of their distress.

20 He sent his word, and healed them: and they were saved from their destruction.

21 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness: and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

22 That they would offer unto him the sacrifice of thanksgiving: and tell out his works with gladness.

23 They that go down to the sea in ships: and occupie their business in great waters,

24 These men see the works of the Lord: and his wonders in the deep.

25 For at his word, the stormy wind ariseth: which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

³⁵⁵ BCP of 1662, expressly to be read on the morning of May 22nd.

- 27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man: and are at their wits end.
 28 So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble: he delivereth them out of their distress.
 29 For he maketh the storm to cease: so that the waves thereof are still.
 30 Then are they glad, because they are at rest: and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.
 31 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness: and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!
 32 That they would exalt him also in the congregation of the people: and praise him in the seat of the elders!
 33 Who turneth the floods into a wilderness: and drieth up the water-springs.
 34 A fruitful land maketh he barren: for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.
 35 Again he maketh the wilderness a standing water: and water-springs of a dry ground.
 36 And there he setteth the hungry: that they may build them a city to dwell in.
 37 That they may sow their land, and plant vineyards: to yield them fruits of increase.
 38 He blesseth them, so that they multiply exceedingly: and suffereth not their cattel to decrease.
 39 And again, when they are minished and brought low: through oppression, through any plague or trouble;
 40 Though he suffer them to be evil intreated through tyrants: and let them wander out of the way in the wilderness;
 41 Yet helpeth he the poor out of misery: and maketh him households like a flock of sheep.
 42 The righteous will consider this and rejoice: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.
 43 Whoso is wise will ponder these things: and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

In Charles's mind, Psalm 107, that *so nobly* describes in detail what God had just done for him the previous day, and by extension can do for those who cry out for this same deliverance from the tyranny of sin, provides a gamut of often highly charged *emotional metaphors* that enables Charles, and the reader of his Journal, to not only to see but also to comprehend what actually happened as God answers the prayer he lifted up to God at about 9:30 A.M. o'clock on that Whitsunday morning.³⁵⁶ These emotional metaphoric phrases include concepts associated with going astray; being spiritually hungry and thirsty; being faint-hearted; crying out to God while in great distress; feeling one's soul is empty; sitting in the shadow of death; being bound in misery and iron; rebelling against God; disregarding God's counsel; having heaviness of heart; falling down and having no help; being in distress, darkness, and the shadow of death; being shackled and imprisoned behind

³⁵⁶ Kimbrough and Newport, 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:106.

gates of brass, and bars of iron;³⁵⁷ being desperate while at death's door; those facing destruction; those who have lost heart and are at their wit's end; those diminished and humbled through oppression, plague, trouble, tyrants, and who wander, lost in the wilderness; and the miserable! Charles identifies with, and employs virtually all of these concepts in his later writings as can be shown in an example from just one of his sermons:

He can translate thee this moment *out of darkness* into his marvellous light, *out of bondage* into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Believest thou that he is able to do this; I know that thou believest! 'Be it unto thee according to thy faith!'

You who have not yet attained to that *vehemence of importunity*, that *unutterable sense of your own emptiness*, which is the voice of one *crying in the wilderness*, Prepare! You, I would *earnestly* exhort to labour after it and never rest satisfied with anything less than Christ in you, the hope of glory. Seek him in all the means he hath appointed, yet not trusting or resting in any. *Hunger and thirst* after him.' Pray without ceasing, till he is formed in your hearts by faith,' and refuse to be comforted because he is in you all, despite your refusing to be comforted. You must despair before you can hope. *Out of the deep* must you call upon him, for it is from thence only that he will hear your voice: *out of the depth of invincible sin and remorseful misery.* You must own and feel yourselves to be utterly lost without Christ, to be lost, undone and damned forever. But from the moment you discern this, there is nothing can pluck you out of his hand;' for (as an excellent author speaks), 'no soul can be lost that can truly humble itself before God, and pray to his mercy to be helped, saved and redeemed in such a manner as it shall please him. Let it be hid or buried or imprisoned where it will, hell and earth, death and darkness, and everything must give way to the soul thus converted to God; that has no confidence of its own; *that sees nothing of its own but sin*, and that desires and calls upon God to save it by some miracle of his own mercy and goodness. By this *sensibility* of the want of a Saviour, and by this humble conversion and application to God for him, all *chains are broken off*, all *wounds are healed*, and the soul must infallibly find, if it continues to seek, its salvation in the unknown depth and riches of the divine mercy.'³⁵⁸

As can be seen, this passage from Charles's sermon four on 1 John 3:14 uses most of the emotional metaphors found in Psalm 107, and especially includes several highly emotionally charged descriptors such as despair, the feeling of emptiness, and heaviness of heart.³⁵⁹ In the center of this sermon Charles writes, "You must despair before you can hope," and this phrase illustrates the very essence of Psalm 107, whether the referent is the BCP Psalm, or Charles's sermon.

How does despair help him? What role does despair play in his quest for spiritual cleanliness? These questions will continue to guide this investigation. His sermon record, written on the back of the sermon manuscript's first page, shows that

³⁵⁷ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, Sermon 8, "Ephesians 5:14," bound in misery and iron, 213.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., "Sermon 4, I John 3:14," 144-145. Parentheses Charles', italics and underline are mine.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 145.

he first preached this sermon only three weeks after his Aldersgate experience, then again on July 16, 1738, and “at least twenty [more] times during 1738 and 1739;”³⁶⁰ therefore, it is not surprising that this sermon follows the same *pattern* as that found in the BCP Psalm 107. The fact that he preached this sermon so many times in such a short span of time further accentuates the importance of this Psalm to him.

Both the BCP Psalm and Charles’s fourth sermon share common patterns: inbred sin pervades the entire human psyche, the carnal mind rules the human, and humanity is thus doomed to destruction, barring a miracle. Charles finally learns that once all dependence on his own works has ceased, then, and only then, can the sinner truly receive real deliverance from Christ. As the texts that have just been examined reveal, it is then, when these props are gone and despair reigns supreme, that God offers salvific deliverance with the stipulation that he, Charles, must first unconditionally surrender to God. It is this action that sets up the battle between God and the carnally minded human who is, as was Charles, aided by the evil one. In the course of the battle, one experiences agony in a form not only physical but also, and especially so, emotional, as one stubbornly turns away from God. But, how can this ensuing battle of wills and agony be of benefit to the human? The Authorized Version of Psalm 107 provides a vivid account of the battle Charles had experienced on the days, months, and years leading up to his Aldersgate experience, and Charles’s fourth sermon accentuates these same battle elements: Charles paints a picture of rebels in (spiritual) darkness and bound in (spiritual) chains to their sins, growing increasingly miserable, as they steadfastly cling to their own imagined worthiness – a situation that results in only more despair; finally, the agony and pressure reaches a climax if and when one relinquishes control of one’s situation by unconditionally surrendering to God. Charles learns that once all earthly props have fallen away, then, and only then, can the sinner truly receive real deliverance from Christ. The result, of course, both in the Psalm and the sermon, is healing through divine mercy as the image of Christ is restored in them, and as their mind is renewed in the image of Christ.

The 1662 BCP Psalm 107, and Charles’s sermon four (in Newport), also contain positive metaphoric phrases associated with the deliverance that occurs after the sinner’s complete capitulation to God, and are equally as forceful in their emotional

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 130, 132.

content as are the negative phrases. God “satisfies the empty soul,” fills the hungry soul with goodness,” “[breaks] the [prison] gates of brass and bars of iron,” “delivered them out of their distress,” “healed them,” “saved them from destruction,” “blesses them,” “[causes them to] multiply exceedingly [in progeny and cattle],” and “help[s] the poor out of misery.” Together, these many emotionally charged metaphoric phrases paint a vivid picture of what actually happened to Charles on his day of Pentecost, but what is the importance of the emotions observed in all of these transactions? There are several more pieces of evidence that needs to be examined in order to confirm the patterns that have been thus far observed.

John Wesley’s summarization of this Psalm in his *Notes Upon the Old Testament* provides a similar, but terser, understanding of this Psalm. It is noted that he divides this Psalm into five sections; initially this writer has seven sections here, but later reduces this Psalm to five sections.

Psalm CVII – The psalmist here observes God’s providential care of the children of men in general, and shews how he helps those that are in any distress, in answer to their prayers. He instances in banishment and dispersion, ver. 1-9. Captivity and imprisonment, ver. 10-16. Sickness, Ver. 17 – 22. Distress at sea, ver. 23-32. The disposal of families and nations, ver. 33-43.³⁶¹

Charles Renders Psalm 107 Into Verse

In 1854, Henry Fish published the Psalms that had been rendered into verse by Charles Wesley, including Psalm 107, reproduced below.³⁶² In his introduction to this book, Fish provides a short, but interesting, history of how these verses were providently preserved for posterity.³⁶³ The point here is that Charles, in his rendering of Psalm 107 into verse, provides the ideal interpretation of what the BCP Psalm means to him in view of the fact that it, in Charles’s own words, *so nobly* describes what had happened to him during his Aldersgate experience. Charles’s own Psalm 107 also poetically describes his feelings, for his poem is a masterpiece of emotionally charged metaphoric writing that tells the story behind an emotionally charged ancient Psalm - of how sinners are dramatically *cured* of their sin nature.

Two points stand out: first, Charles’s rendition is an interpretation of the BCP’s Psalm 107, wherein Charles poetically expresses his understanding of his own

³⁶¹ Op. Cit., vol. 3, 1765, Psalm 107.

³⁶² Charles Wesley, Henry Fish, ed., 1854, *A Poetical Version of Nearly the Whole of The Psalms of David*, Ps. 107, 190-195.

³⁶³ Ibid., Introduction, vi-vii.

Aldersgate experience within the setting of the BCP, Psalm 107; and others can also use his description to help them understand their own Aldersgate experience, either as a goal, or as an event or as progressive growth of holiness in their lives.³⁶⁴

Second, Charles's description provides great food for thought and a firm basis for gratitude concerning the graciousness and loving-kindness of God.³⁶⁵

Below, is the text of Charles's Psalm 107, with the corresponding verse numbers from the 1662 BCP on the right side of the page. It can be noted that he uses no less than ten exclamation points, which number is an indication of the high emotional intensity of his masterpiece.

PSALM CVII.³⁶⁶

Corresponding vs. in BCP 1662

Part I.

1 O YE that know the pardoning Lord, His everlasting love record, Give thanks, and glory in his grace! Gather' d by Jesus from all lands, Redeem'd from sin and Satan's hands, Your merciful Redeemer praise:	1-3
2 Ere yet on Christ their souls were stay'd, O'er the wide wilderness they stray'd, The world of sin they wander'd round; Parch'd up with thirst, and pined with want, Weary, and comfortless, and faint, They no abiding city found.	4-5
3 To God they in their trouble cried, And kindly he their want supplied, And saved them from their sore distress; Himself the living way he show'd, Led them from all their sins to God, And bade them dwell in perfect peace.	6-7
4 O that the world would therefore praise The Lord, the God of boundless grace, Whose love in all his works is seen! With joyful lips confess his power, And ever feel, proclaim, adore His wonders toward the sons of men.	8

³⁶⁴ Cf., verse 42, below.

³⁶⁵ BCP, verse 43: Whoso is wise will ponder these things: and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

³⁶⁶ Charles Wesley, 1854, ed. Henry Fish (1802-1879), *A Poetical Version of Nearly the Whole of The Psalms of David*, 190-195.

Part II

- 5 By him the hungry soul is fed; 9-10
 He fills the poor with living bread,
 And breaks the mournful prisoners' chain;
 Those that in death and darkness dwelt,
 Gross darkness, such as might be felt,
 The confines of eternal pain:
- 6 Because the rebels mock'd his word, 11-12
 And spurn'd the goodness of their Lord,
 Jesus, most merciful, most high!
 He gave them up their guilt to feel;
 Humbled them to the gates of hell,
 As doom'd the second death to die.
- 7 To God they then in trouble cried, 13-14
 And kindly he their wants supplied,
 And saved them from their sore distress;
 He brought them from the depth again,
 Pardon'd their sin, and burst their chain,
 And loosed, and bade them go in peace.
- 8 O that the world would therefore praise 15
 The Lord, the God of boundless grace,
 Whose love in all his works is seen!
 With joyful lips confess his power,
 And ever feel, proclaim, adore
 His wonders towards the sons of men!

Part III

- 9 He smote the gates that kept them in, 16
 The brasen gates of actual sin,
 The iron bars in sunder broke;
 From Satan's dungeon brought them up,
 Delivered by the gospel-hope,
 And into glorious freedom spoke.
- 10 But when to folly they return'd, 17-18
 His wrath against the sinners burn'd,
 And plagued them with judicial pain;
 Diseased they loathed their pleasant meat,
 Their soul just sunk into the pit,
 Their dust return'd to dust again.
- 11 To God they then in trouble cried, 19-20
 And kindly he their wants supplied,
 And saved them from their sore distress;
 He sent his all-reviving word,
 Their body to full health restored,
 Their soul to perfect holiness.
- 12 O that the world would therefore praise 21
 The Lord, the God of boundless grace,

Whose love in all his works is seen!
 With joyful lips confess his power,
 And ever feel, proclaim, adore
 His wonders towards the sons of men!

Part IV

- 13 His praise their happy lives employ; 22
 His praise, in songs of thankful joy,
 Let all the sons of men proclaim:
 His kindly, providential care
 The forces of the sea declare,
 And shout amidst the waves his praise.
- 14 Who plough with ships the watery road, 23-26
 These see the mighty works of God,
 His wonders in the' unbounded main:
 He bids the stormy wind arise:
 The tempest whirls them to the skies,
 And sweeps them down to hell again.
- 15 Their joints and soul dissolved they feel; 27-28
 Drunken, but not with wine, they reel,
 Their hopes expire, their labours cease:
 To God they then despairing cry,
 Who sends them succour from on high,
 And saves them in their last distress.
- 16 Obedient to his sovereign will, 29-30
 The winds are hush'd, the sea is still,
 Their fears are with the storm suppress;
 Conducted by the' Almighty Hand,
 With clamorous joy they grasp the land,
 And in their long-sought haven rest.
- 17 O that the world would therefore praise 31
 The Lord, the God of boundless grace,
 Whose love in all his works is seen!
 With joyful lips confess his power,
 And ever feel, proclaim, adore
 His wonders towards the sons of men!

Part V

- 18 O that his saints, with one accord, 32
 Would magnify their gracious Lord,
 His goodness and his power proclaim:
 Let all the' assembled people join,
 The elders chant, in hymns divine,
 Their great Redeemer's glorious Name.
- 19 Dreadful in power, as rich in grace, 33-34
 He frowns, and changes nature's face,
 Where sinners load the guilty land;
 He looks their springs and rivers dry,

- Their fertile fields as deserts lie
Accursed, and turn'd to barren sand.
- 20 He smiles, and makes the desert smile, 35
Blesses the dry, unfruitful soil,
With living streams the waste supplies;
The waste is clothed with sudden green,
And herbs, and flowers, and fruits are seen
Throughout the rising paradise.
- 21 Thither he bids the poor repair, 36-37
The hungry find their portion there,
And build a city in his Name:
They sow their fields, and vineyards plant,
And, bless'd of God with all they want,
His providential love proclaim.
- 22 He bids the little flock increase, 38
He fills them with his righteousness,
His mercy's unexhausted store;
He never takes his mercy back,
He would not they should him forsake,
Or ever want or wander more.
- 23 But if again, by sin brought low, 39-40
They feel the weight of penal woe,
'Minish'd, afflicted, and oppress'd,
He chastens princes for their pride,
And leaves his own in deserts wide
To wander on, and want his rest.
- 24 Yet when beneath his wrath they stoop, 41
He lifts the humbled sinners up;
Revives and cheers his abject poor;
He dries the tears of all that weep,
And gathers home his scatter'd sheep,
And bids them to the end endure.
- 25 The righteous shall observe and praise 42
His judgments, and his works of grace,
His humbling and restoring power;
While all that dared their God gainsay,
Shall wonder, fear, and melt away,
And charge his providence no more.
- 26 But he that, to salvation wise, 43
To things divine his heart applies,
The hidden mystery shall prove;
That love of Christ which knows no end
He with all saints shall comprehend,
That utmost height of Jesu's love! ³⁶⁷

³⁶⁷ Charles Wesley's Psalm 107 may also be found in the American version of Henry Fish, ed., (1854), ed. Thomas O. Summers, 1855, *The Wesleyan Psalter: A Poetical Version of Nearly the*

A close reading of the 1662 BCP translation of Psalm 107, which is a form of Hebrew poetry, when compared with Charles's rendering of this Psalm into modern eighteenth-century English verse, shows a clear correspondence of ideas on a verse-by-verse comparison. Yet, there are important differences: Charles clearly reflects his own Christian, New Testament viewpoint in his rendering of the ancient Hebrew poem in much the same way that some of the apostles appropriated and re-interpreted Old Testament texts as the New Testament was being written.³⁶⁸

This Psalm, written by Charles, reflects his *reframing* of the BCP Psalm 107, with respect to the emotions, thoughts, and experiences that Charles, himself, endured; it is his autobiography. In light of the ἀγωνίζομαι that Charles underwent, *endured* is a most appropriate word as he recalls his own Aldersgate experience.

Another way to grasp the meaning of Charles's reframing of Psalm 107 is to succinctly summarize the actions that his rendition depicts. In the outline below, it becomes readily apparent that Charles's organization of his Psalm 107 depicts a series of repetitive actions: falling away from God, followed by deliverance, interposed with thanksgiving and praise, and ending with descriptions of God's blessings upon the faithful, with words of warning to all people. These repetitive actions describe the sinner's efforts to *surrender unconditionally* to God, and God's efforts to deliver the sinner from destruction; this poem is a description of the agony one experiences as she or he struggles to surrender unconditionally to God.

Whole Book of Psalms, 199-204. Both the 1854 and the 1855 copies (and Osborn editions of 1870 & 2011) are textually identical concerning Psalm 107, but differ in pagination.

Also see Samuel J. Rogal, ed., 2011, *A new and critical edition of George Osborn's The poetical works of John and Charles Wesley* (1868-1872), with the addition of notes, annotations, biographical and background information, Vol. 8, Lewiston: Mellen, 291-299.

Randy Maddox and his wife, 2010, through the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, have published extensive information concerning the Henry Fish manuscript of Charles Wesley's versification of most of the Psalms under the title of *MS Fish (and MS Emory)*:

https://divinity.duke.edu/sites/divinity.duke.edu/files/documents/cswt/76_MS_Fish.pdf
This document indicates that Charles likely completed the work on his Psalter by 1750. In a letter to Sarah Gwynne, Jr., dated January 3rd, 1749, Charles makes reference to "[his] new version of the Psalms," in, 2013, *The Letters of Charles Wesley, a Critical Edition, with Introduction and Notes*, 1:195, eds. Kenneth G. C. Newport and Gareth Lloyd.

³⁶⁸ For instance, there has been considerable debate as to whether or not the "virgin" mentioned in Matthew 1:23 can be referenced back to that in the book of Isaiah, 7:14.

Verse	Part I.		Part IV.
1	Thanksgiving	13	Praise for deliverance
2	Falling away - unbelief	14	Praise for deliverance
3	Deliverance - belief	15	Falling away and deliverance
4	Praise for deliverance	16	Deliverance described
	Part II.	17	Praise for deliverance
5	God Sustains		Part V.
6	Falling away - unbelief	18	Praise for deliverance
7	Deliverance - belief	19	God curses evildoers
8	Praise for deliverance	20	God blesses the obedient
	Part III.	21	God blesses the obedient
9	Deliverance described	22	God blesses the obedient
10	Falling away - unbelief	23	Warning not to fall away
11	Deliverance - belief	24	Deliverance
12	Praise for deliverance	25	Word to the righteous
			Word to the impenitent
		26	Word to the wise

Charles's poem can also be seen as depicting the internal human struggle between belief and unbelief, which also is a good descriptor of his own struggle to truly experience full salvation. As with every person, Charles found it exceedingly difficult to discard every so-called good work he had ever done and to simply trust only God for deliverance. Unconditional and *complete capitulation* to God comes only through much internal *emotional* struggle to put one's faith and trust only in God, as is depicted in Charles's Psalm 107, or, in John Wesley's comments on the book of Luke, 13:24:

Strive [ἀγωνίζομαι, agonize] to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. [Luke 13:24]

Strive to enter in—Agonize. Strive as in an agony. So the word signifies. Otherwise none shall enter in. Barely seeking will not avail.³⁶⁹

John Fletcher is in agreement with the Wesley brothers:

Should ye ask, Which is the way to Christian Perfection? Shall we go to it by internal stillness, agreeable to this direction of Moses and David, *The Lord will fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. Stand still and see the salvation of God. Be still and know that I am God. Stand in awe and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still?*

Or shall we press after it by an *internal wrestling*, according to these commands of Christ, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force, &c.*³⁷⁰

³⁶⁹ John Wesley, *Notes Upon the New Testament*, 1754, New York: Eaton & Mains, Luke 13:24.
³⁷⁰ Fletcher conflates two Bible verses here: Luke 13:24 and Matthew 11:12.

I answer, that the way to perfection [sanctification] is by the due combination of prevenient, assisting *free-grace*; and submissive, assisted *free.-will*. Antinomian stillness therefore, which says free-grace must do all, is not the way.³⁷¹

What is the purpose of this “internal wrestling” of which Charles and John Fletcher write? How does this wrestling help the seeker? As Wesley’s theologian, Fletcher’s wording, here, particularly his use of the terms *assisting free-grace* and *assisted free-will* gains additional importance. The assistance that God gives to rebellious human *free-will* is called prevenient grace, a still vital and necessary element of Wesleyan theology today.

Charles answers these questions himself in a sermon³⁷² that he copied from his brother’s manuscript sermon and subsequently made it, with little or no alteration, his own, wherein he succinctly lays out his (and our) original state before his (and our) Aldersgate experience, as well as his (and our) goal in seeking that experience in the first place. Charles’s sermon register³⁷³ indicates that he preached this sermon “some six times” between February, 1737, and October, 1738; this information tells us that he understands the reality of his condition as he agonizes, and that he knows what he needs from God, but he has not yet learned how to receive his needs, for they are received by grace alone. In applying today what Charles has learned the hard way: if the seeker fails to realize either his true condition, or fails to understand what she is seeking, or tries to modify God’s plan, then they are not likely to experience their goal of a true Aldersgate experience leading to victory, joy, and deliverance from the power of sin: this information may be of special interest to pastors, teachers, and preachers.

As to his condition, Charles understands, in this 1737 sermon, exactly what he needs as he seeks his salvation; he has yet to understand how to receive it:

I.2. Now this great work, this one thing needful, is the renewal of our fallen nature. In the image of God was man made, but a little lower than the angels. His nature was perfect, angelical, divine. He was an incorruptible picture of the God of glory. He bore his stamp on every part of his soul; the brightness of his Creator shone mightily upon him. But sin hath now effaced the image of God. He is no longer nearly allied to angels. He is sunk lower than the very beasts of the field. His soul is not only earthly and sensual, but devilish. Thus is the mighty fallen! The glory is departed from him! His brightness is swallowed up in utter darkness!

³⁷¹ John Fletcher, *Christian Perfection, being an Extract from the Rev. Mr. Fletcher’s Polemical Essay*, 1797, 30. Italics are Fletcher’s, brackets are mine.

³⁷² Kenneth G. Newport, 2001, “The Sermons of Charles Wesley,” Sermon 21, *One Thing Needful*, 362-368. Also in BCE, “Works of John Wesley,” Sermon 146, 4:352-359.

³⁷³ Ibid., Charles’s sermon register is on the verso of the last leaf of his ms. sermon 20, 360, 362.

3. From the glorious liberty wherein he was made he is fallen into the basest bondage. The devil, whose slave he now is, to work his will, hath him so fast in prison that he cannot get forth. He hath bound him with a thousand chains, the heavy chains of his own vile affections. For every inordinate appetite, every unholy passion, as it is the express image of the god of this world, so it is the most galling yoke, the most grievous chain, that can bind a free-born spirit. And with these is every child of Adam, everyone that is born into this world, so loaded that he cannot lift up an eye, a thought to heaven; that his whole soul cleaveth unto the dust!" ³⁷⁴

Please note that the language that Charles uses: “every inordinate appetite, every unholy passion,” are words that, in today’s language, refer to our emotions, and that one’s emotions, also, are corrupt and in need of salvation. Thus, another role of emotion in Wesley’s theology is as a candidate for salvation! Charles is asking God to restore the full image of Christ in him, and writes in such a manner that any who seeks the same thing may benefit from learning about his agonizing struggles.

Another facet of this agonizing struggle to have the image of Christ restored in us is the carnal mind’s refusal to release one’s claim to works righteousness; one’s emotional love of the world is difficult, indeed, to break. John Wesley makes at least thirty references to the carnal mind, but his comments on 2 Corinthians 5:17 are especially pertinent to this discussion. He writes, concerning the carnal mind:

(2). 'But [there are those who say that] a man cannot be clean, sanctified, holy, and at the same time unclean, unsanctified, unholy.' Indeed he may. So the Corinthians were. 'Ye are washed,' says the Apostle, 'ye are sanctified'; namely cleansed from 'fornication, idolatry, drunkenness', and all other outward sin. And yet at the same time, in another sense of the word, they were *unsanctified*: they were not *washed*, not inwardly *cleansed* from envy, evil surmising, partiality. 'But sure they had not a new heart and an old heart together.' It is most sure they had; for at that very time their hearts were *truly*, yet not *entirely*, renewed. Their carnal mind was nailed to the cross; yet it was not wholly destroyed. 'But could they be *unholy* while they were "temples of the Holy Ghost"? Yes, that they were 'temples of the Holy Ghost' is certain. And it is equally certain they were, in some degree, *carnal*, that is, *unholy*.³⁷⁵

Here, John states the position of the Wesley brothers, and all others in a like position, prior to each having their own unique Aldersgate experience, which experience symbolizes the completion of the destruction of the carnal mind. But what, really, was the Wesley brothers’ *position*? They had already been justified and the process of sanctification had begun many years earlier: they were Christians, and they loved God. John writes, concerning this claim:

³⁷⁴ Ibid., Sermon 21, 363-364. Underlining is mine to emphasize that our emotions also need salvation.

³⁷⁵ Op Cit., Sermon 13: *On Sin In Believers*, BCE 2:326. Underlining mine.

4. And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, *sanctification* begins. In that instant we are 'born again', 'born from above', born of the Spirit'. There is a *real* as well as a *relative* change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel the 'love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us', producing love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honour, of money; together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper—in a word, changing the 'earthly, sensual, devilish' mind into 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus'.
5. How naturally do those who experience such a change imagine that all sin is gone! That it is utterly rooted out of their heart, and has no more any place therein!
6. But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed.³⁷⁶

This passage tells the reader several important Wesleyan ideas. First, sanctification is a process that begins simultaneously with justification and new birth. But, as the first quotation on this page informs one, all of these processes, however, are not enough to destroy the carnal mind for it is only nailed to the cross. The second quotation tells us much about the first washing Christ gives us, and points out why a second cleansing is necessary, for one climax to the *process* of sanctification is culminated in an actual Aldersgate experience, which is the *event* of sanctification, and when the carnal mind, the Old Man of which Paul writes,³⁷⁷ finally dies. One is no longer the double-minded person described by the Apostle James, a person with, so to speak, one foot tenuously placed in heaven and the other foot firmly planted in the world.³⁷⁸

What allows the carnal mind to linger on so long? It is common knowledge that John Wesley was justified at his 1725 ordination, if not before then, yet he still depended on his own works, which is an indication of the presence of the carnal mind, until 1738. Likewise, Charles was justified long before his own 1738 Aldersgate experience, and just as his brother had depended on works and faith for salvation, so did Charles continue to do so. John mentioned in his diary entry that on May 3rd, 1738, Peter Böhler had shown Charles that it was by faith *alone* that one could receive the promises of God.

Wed. 3. [May, 1738] My brother had a long and particular conversation with Peter Böhler. And it now pleased God to open his eyes, so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one, true, living faith, whereby alone 'through grace we are saved'.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Op Cit., Sermon 43: The Scripture Way of Salvation, BCE 2:158-159. Italics are Wesley's.

³⁷⁷ E.g., Romans 6:6.

³⁷⁸ James 1:8.

³⁷⁹ John Wesley, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., BCE: *The Works of John Wesley*, "Journals and Diaries," 18:237.

This statement demands a definition of Wesleyan faith, and simply put, it is, in the words of a late nineteenth-century Methodist holiness preacher by the name of McLaughlin: Faith is tak[ing] God at his word.³⁸⁰ And what is God's word in this matter of salvation? John Wesley clearly defines the requirements for salvation:

Salvation is carried on by 'convincing grace', usually in Scripture termed 'repentance', which brings a larger measure of self-knowledge, and a farther deliverance from the heart of stone. Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation, whereby 'through grace' we 'are saved by faith', consisting of those two grand branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God: by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God.³⁸¹

In other words, one is saved by grace, through the means of faith, that is, by simply taking God at his word that when he promises to save us - he will save us, and there is no other requirement to receive God's salvation. God speaks, in such verses as Matthew 11:28-30, concerning which verse John comments:

Come to me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

28. *Come to me* - Here he shows to whom he is phased to reveal these things; to the weary and heavy laden; *ye that labour* - After rest in God: *and are heavy laden* - With the guilt and power of sin: *and I will give you rest* - I alone (for none else can) *will freely give you* (what ye cannot purchase) *rest* from the guilt of sin by justification, and from the power of sin by sanctification.³⁸²

Applying McLaughlin's definition of faith to this scripture promise made by God to lost humanity, Wesley teaches that the seeker needs to hear this message and trust God to honor his word as he said he would. And God will do so, as the multitudinous testimonies of the Wesley brothers attest. Both Charles and John, sincerely, with tears, agony, and despair, at last, after great agony, jettisoned their own so-called good works, and simply ask God to deliver and heal them just as they are, diseased with all manner of sin, filthy and desperate. And God did so. But how did they know, what was the foundation upon which their belief that God really did heal them? They knew they were delivered, saved, simply and solely because God said he would heal and deliver them, and this statement is the only basis for genuine

³⁸⁰ George Asbury McLaughlin (1851-1933), 1897, *Old Wine in New Bottles, or Old Truths Restated*, 71.

³⁸¹ John Wesley, Sermon 85: *On Working Out Our Own Salvation*, BCE 3:204

³⁸² Op. Cit., 1755, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, first Ed. Italics and parentheses are Wesley's.

faith. True, they also *felt* the change, as their subsequent testimonies reveal, but they felt these changes because God had really done something for them in the first place when they finally just *took him at his word*.

John delineates this truth clearly in his comment for this verse by using italicized words and including comments enclosed by parentheses, techniques that John used to emphasize what he is trying to communicate to the reader. John notes that Jesus is speaking to the reader: “to the weary and heavy laden; *ye that labour*.” “*And I will give you rest* - I alone (for none else can).” [I] *will freely give you* (what ye cannot purchase [or earn by doing good works]). [I will give you] rest from the guilt of sin by justification, and from the power of sin by sanctification.³⁸³ John calls Justification and Sanctification the “two grand branches” of Methodism:

We experience the proper Christian salvation, whereby 'through grace' we 'are saved by faith' [that is, by simply and only taking God at his word that he will save us], consisting of those two grand branches, justification and sanctification. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God: by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God.³⁸⁴

The Wesley brothers gained this understanding of justification and sanctification each through their own struggles leading up to their individual Aldersgate experiences, and for the rest of their lives they remained true in preaching and emphasizing the importance, reality, and necessity of these *two grand branches*, thus displaying to our view the tremendous influence and importance of their experiences and agonizing, an importance that can hardly be over-stressed.

The fly in the ointment of salvation, so to speak, is if one also depends on one's own good works that one supposes *will aid God's offer of salvation*. Both Wesley brothers taught that those who add to or modify God's requirement for salvation, that his gracious offer is voided, and until they relinquish – jettison - their own so-called good works, God will let them struggle until they learn to obey him, just as we have observed Charles's struggle to the point of ἀγωνίζομαι. When Charles finally approaches God in true faith, it is then, and then only, when God delivers him.

This aspect of claiming salvation through the virtue of one's own works is most easily seen in John's writings, but here is another example of Charles's struggle with the problem of works-righteousness, as shown in this poem from his 1749 hymnal:

³⁸³ See previous page, and fn 386 (116). Brackets are mine.

³⁸⁴ John Wesley, Sermon 85: *On Working Out Our Own Salvation*, BCE 3:204.

XCVI The Bloody Issue Cured

- 1 How shall a Sinner come to GOD?
A Fountain of polluted Blood
For Years my Plague hath been,
From *Adam* the Infection came,
My Nature is with his the same,
The same with his my Sin.
- 2 In me the stubborn Evil reigns,
The Poison spreads throughout my veins,
A loathsom sore Disease,
Makes all my Soul, and Life unclean,
My every Word, Work, Thought is Sin,
And desp'rate Wickedness.
- 3 Long have I liv'd in Grief and Pain,
And suffer'd many Things in vain,
And all Physicians tried;
Nor Men nor Means my Soul Can heal,
The Plague is still incurable,
The Fountain is undried.
- 4 No help can I from these receive,
Nor men nor means can e'er relieve,
Or give my spirit ease;
Still worse and worse my case I find;
Here then I cast them all behind,
From all my works I cease.
- 5 I use, but trust in means no more,
Give my self-saving labours o'er,
The unequal task forbear;
My strength is spent, my strife is past,
Hardly I give up all at last,
And yield to self-despair.
- 6 I find brought in a Better Hope,
Succour there is for me laid up,
For every helpless soul;
Salvation is in Jesu's name,
Could I but touch his Garment's Hem,
Even I should be made whole.
- 7 His body doth the Cure dispense,
His Garment is the Ordinance
In which He deigns to appear;
The Word, the Prayer, the Broken Bread,
Virtue from Him doth here proceed,
And I shall find Him here.
- 8 I follow'd with the thoughtless Throng,
And press'd, and crowded Him too long,
And weigh'd Him down with Sin;
But *Him* I did not hope to *touch*,
Never used the Means *as such*,
Or look'd to be made clean.
- 9 The Spirit of an healthful Mind
I waited not in them to find,
The Bread that comes from Heaven;
Beyond my form I did not go,
The Power of Godliness to know,
And feel my Sins forgiven.
- 10 But now I seek to touch my LORD,
To hear his Whisper in the Word,
To feel his Spirit blow;
To catch the Love of which I read,
To taste Him in the Mystic Bread,
And all his Sweetness know.
- 11 'Tis here, in Hope my God to find,
With humble Awe I come behind,
And wait his Grace to prove;
Before his Face I dare not stand,
But faith puts forth a Trembling Hand,
To apprehend his Love.
- 12 Surely his Healing Power is nigh;
I touch Him now! by faith ev'n I,
My LORD, lay Hold on Thee:
Thy Power is present now to heal,
I feel, through all my soul I feel
That Jesus died for me.
- 13 Issues from Thee a purer Flood,
The poison'd fountain of my Blood
Is in a Moment dried;
The sovereign Antidote takes Place,
And I am freely saved by Grace,
And I am justified.
- 14 I glory in Redemption found:
Jesus, my LORD, and GOD, look round,
The Conscious Sinner see ;
'Tis I have touch'd thy cloaths, and own
The Miracle Thy Grace hath done,
On such a Worm as me.
- 15 Behold me prostrate at thy Feet,
And hear me thankfully repeat
The Mercies of my GOD;
I felt from Thee the Medicine flow,
I tell Thee all the Truth, and shew
The Virtue of thy Blood.
- 16 With lowly reverential Fear
I testify, that Thou art near
To All who seek thy Love;
Saviour of All I Thee proclaim;
The World may know thy Healing Name,
And all its Wonders prove.

17 Speak then once more, and tell my Soul,
Sinner, thy Faith hath made Thee whole,
Thy Plague of Sin is o'er;

Be perfected in Holiness,
Depart in Everlasting Peace,
Depart, and Sin no more.

385

In 2:5 (verse 2, line 5), Charles admits all his own works are simply sin. 4:6 depicts Charles throwing away all his own works-righteousness so that he might depend only upon God. Verse five illustrates him jettisoning his “self-saving labours.” The whole tenor of this poem can be summarized as Charles being infected with the debilitating disease of sin, and Christ, Himself, and only Himself, providing the sole cure for that disease.³⁸⁶ This poem can also be seen as a recapitulation of Psalm 107 because what Charles has written really reframes that story, once again, of that wonderful, memorable Psalm. Of course, Charles took his theme in *The Bloody Issue Cured* from Mark.

5:34 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, ²⁶ And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, ²⁷ When she had heard of Jesus, *came in the press behind, and touched his garment.* ²⁸ For she said, *If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.* ²⁹ And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and *she felt in her body* that she was healed of that plague. ³⁰ And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? ³¹ And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? ³² And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. ³³ But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. ³⁴ And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.³⁸⁷

The parallels between Charles’s poem and the biblical story from which he drew it are many. Verse 8, line 1 (8:1) shows Charles among the crowd that was pressing Jesus, not daring to touch Him; the biblical woman also “came in the press [of people] behind [Jesus]. In 10:1, Charles finally decides to reach forth to do so, being close enough to hear His whisper, feel His Spirit, and taste (experience) Christ, Himself; the woman likewise “touched [Jesus’] garment.” In 12:1, Charles musters the courage to actually (that is, spiritually) touch his Lord, a touch that permeates and reverberates throughout his entire soul in a manner more real than could be produced by a physical touch; it was an electrifying touch; the woman also “felt” her healing throughout her entire body. In verses 13 and 14, Charles is healed

³⁸⁵ Charles Wesley, M.A., Student of Christ-Church, Oxford, 1749, *Hymns and Sacred Poems, in Two Volumes*. 2:168-171. Italics are Wesley’s; underlining is mine.

³⁸⁶ JW and CW often call sin a disease, cf. Sermon 14, ‘The Repentance of Believers,’ BCE 1:347

³⁸⁷ Italics are mine.

[event] and yet is being healed [process]:³⁸⁸ he is the recipient of a miracle, just as was the woman in the story recorded in the book of Mark.

The fact that the woman received a physical healing and Charles a spiritual healing is not an obstacle to this presentation, for God often uses temporal events to foster an understanding of spiritual ones. While Charles, in his poem, does not specifically make this claim, it is reasonable to make this inference based on the above comparison between the biblical texts and the language in *The Bloody Issue Cured*.

The final verse (verse 17) written by Charles expresses his strong desire for divine assurance regarding the healing he has just received; in fact, he desires the same assurance that the Lord gave to the woman: “Speak then once more, and tell my Soul, / Sinner, thy Faith hath made Thee whole!” Charles summarizes, for the reader’s benefit, precisely what God has done for him: “thy Plague of Sin is o’er; / Be perfected in Holiness,” and he closes with a benediction similar to that bestowed upon the woman: “Depart in Everlasting Peace, / Depart, and Sin no more;” and here, the reader is given the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (that is, an Aldersgate experience), and the requisite spiritual striving (agonizing) that is required, and described, in Psalm 107, in order to obtain it. This striving is no more, or less, than the struggle of the carnal mind aided by the evil one to resist the total surrender to God, as evidenced by Charles’s own testimony:

... Still I felt a violent opposition and reluctance to believe. Yet still the Spirit of God strove with my own and the evil spirit, till by degrees he chased away the darkness of my unbelief. I found myself convinced - I knew not how, nor when - and immediately fell to intercession.³⁸⁹

Please note the stumbling block to his salvation that Charles reveals to us in this statement (above): it was unbelief, or lack of true faith - but a lack of works is not mentioned, because works play no part in one obtaining salvation. Works, as both Charles and John teach, can only provide proof of one’s salvation, for works, in Wesleyan soteriology, are only a result of salvation. Of note to the theme of this thesis is his description of the violent nature of the emotional struggle through which Charles fought, that can be seen once again as a struggle between faith and unbelief.

³⁸⁸ See this thesis, 19, for background information concerning my understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (sanctification) as both an “event” and a “process.”

³⁸⁹ Kimbrough, S. T., Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, eds., 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:106-107. Underline mine.

Reframing of Psalm 107 For Today

Charles's references to Psalm 107 provide an exquisitely detailed account of the strife, or agony, that he experienced through his Aldersgate experience as he struggles to totally surrender to God. These references bring to light a pattern that is repeated with minor variations throughout much of his writings, a pattern that depicts his arduous path from sin to salvation and reveals the long-lasting influence that his Aldersgate experience has on him. But how can a twenty-first century Christian relate to and comprehend such an experience as described by an eighteenth-century writer in archaic language? Can this objective be aided by reframing this ancient poem using today's language?

Immediately below, is this author's reframing of the BCP Psalm 107 and Charles's poetic version of this psalm; the metaphors utilized are those found in the Psalm, and especially the concepts in verses 23-32, concerning "Sailors on great seas;" the struggle remains that between belief and unbelief. This reframing represents the mental position which John and Charles find themselves in as they each agonize their way to their own Aldersgate experience. They each had previously thought that their works and self-righteousness would save them, but no help comes to them, and no relief for their anguish is in sight; despair reigns.

Suppose a sailor is lost and in a life-raft floating at the center of a vast ocean (named despair). Large sharks (evil beings) are continually circling the tiny vessel, and the lone occupant of that vessel is earnestly, and continually, praying to God for deliverance.

Then, a Voice is heard commanding our sailor to throw first one, then the other oar into the sea. This command, leading to a total loss of the sailor's control if obeyed, brings fear, then despair, followed by loss of hope. The sailor nervously looks in every direction around the raft, but sees nothing except an angry sea on all sides that is filled with sharks; the sailor refuses to obey the Voice. The Wesley brothers would label this refusal as an act of disobedience and unbelief, in other words, as sin. Trust now becomes an issue; can the sailor trust the Voice enough to discard the oars? The sailor is at his wit's end, despairing, and knows not what to do; indeed, there is nothing that he can do.

He is imprisoned in his own security, yet knows not that the boat imprisons him in his distress just as surely as would bars of iron or gates of brass mentioned in the Psalm. Now he begins to strive (*ἀγωνίζομαι*) in earnest; after great struggle, finally first one, then hesitantly the other oar is regretfully cast into the sea; still no help appears on the horizon. Despair and hopelessness increases.

Then the Voice commands the sailor to jump out of the boat and into the sea but the sailor cries all the more unto God, feeling all the more faint-hearted, and despairing as he eyes the circling sharks and angry sea; he is filled with a great heaviness of heart. He feels he will die, his heart is pounding, and he thinks he is fast approaching death's door; he is miserable. The sailor has finally exhausted all his own resources; his sins now weigh heavily upon him; he fears they will sink him to the bottom of the sea if he should jump.

The sailor's continual cry unto God is answered with more (prevenient) grace in the form of courage needed to finally trust and obey God by jumping out of the worldly security of the raft and into the shark-infested sea, thereby discarding every single bit of his reliance for salvation on his own self-righteousness or good works. To the sailor's utter surprise and joy, when he finally obeys he is unexpectedly, and miraculously, safe on shore! Praise God!³⁹⁰

This experience, filled with strong emotional elements, demands many exclamation points, which punctuation Charles uses liberally as he tells his Journal story, and in his rendering of Psalm 107, and in many of his poems describing the events that transpired on his special Whitsunday! Charles's is an age-old story, first recorded in the Psalms, a pattern that is played out repeatedly down through the centuries and millennia, and is still being played out today, and for this reason his emotional story becomes all the more important to be told today. He correctly identifies the struggle; it is between his own belief and unbelief. He reminds one of the father of the deaf and dumb child, who exclaims: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."³⁹¹

Charles believed that when our first parents committed their first sin great consequences were set in motion, consequences that ultimately and drastically affected him (Charles). Likewise, when Charles finally let go of his own life-raft, and having nothing, no other alternative but to truly trust Jesus by an unconditional, total, surrender to God, then great consequences were once again set in motion, consequences that are still being played out in people's lives all across the world. Of course, the life-raft represents all the good deeds of Charles, or John, or any seeker, male or female, after righteousness; the raft represents all the works in which each of them (or us, perhaps,) had misplaced their trust and hope.

Two more poems or hymns are also pertinent to this discussion. The first is *And Can It Be*, "written immediately after CW's conversion, May 21, 1738."³⁹² The second hymn is *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*, "apparently written May 21, 1739," on the first-year anniversary of Charles's memorable Aldersgate experience.³⁹³ Both of these hymns speak directly about his Aldersgate experience, and are heavily laden with emotional content that contributes to a better understanding of Charles's Aldersgate experience.

³⁹⁰ James Boetcher, written for this paper, July 22, 2017.

³⁹¹ Cf., Mark 9:24.

³⁹² Franz Hildebrandt, and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., Hymn 193, BCE 7:322-323. I quite agree with this quote, in a footnote, that the editors appended to this hymn.

³⁹³ Ibid., BCE 7:79-80, footnote to hymn 1.

And Can It Be, Analysis

This hymn was first published by John and Charles Wesley in the 1739 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* under the title of *Free Grace*. In the BCE, this same hymn is reproduced without a title as [Hymn] 193, except verse five from the 1739 edition is omitted, and verse six of the 1739 edition is substituted therein.³⁹⁴ The verses below are taken from the 1739 edition due to the importance of the omitted verse in the BCE. The italics are inserted by this author in order to emphasize the personal nature of this Psalm.

1 And can it be, that *I* should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for *me*, who caused his pain?
For *me*? Who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
That thou, my God, shouldst die for *me*?

2 'Tis myst'ry all: th' Immortal dies!
Who can explore his strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore!
Let angel minds inquire no more

3 He left his Father's throne above
(So free, so infinite his grace!),
Emptied himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race.
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out *me*!

4 Long *my* imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray;
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, *my* heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

5. Still the small inward voice *I* hear,
That whispers all *my* sins forgiv'n;
Still the atoning blood is near,
That quench'd the wrath of hostile heav'n:
I feel the life his wounds impart;
I feel my Saviour in *my* Heart.

6 No condemnation now *I* dread,
Jesus, and all in him, is *mine*.
Alive in him, *my* living head,

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 7:322-323.

And clothed in righteousness divine,
 Bold *I* approach th'eternal throne,
 And claim the crown, through Christ *my* own.

The setting in which Charles pens this hymn is minutes, or perhaps only a very few hours, after his traumatic and emotionally charged evangelical conversion experience. The similarity of this hymn to that of the Psalm that so nobly describes his experience, and Charles's Psalm 107, and this author's reframing of that Psalm - is striking. This hymn, *And Can it Be*, could be considered as an inset within the bigger picture of Charles's Aldersgate experience; an inset that provides detailed information about his feelings, emotions and thinking as he jumps out of the boat, so to speak, and lands safely on the shore. Charles recognizes that it is love that moves God's helping hand, and it is God's love in Charles that moves his trust in God.

Like his brother will be on his own day of deliverance, Charles was mightily influenced by Martin Luther, and this influence is clearly seen from the first stanza and throughout this great hymn, when Charles uses a large number of personal pronouns. Four days earlier, on May 17th, Charles makes the following entry in his Journal:³⁹⁵

Wednesday, May 17. I experienced the power of Christ rescuing me in temptation.

Today I first saw Luther on the Galatians...

Who would believe our Church had been founded on this important article of justification by faith alone ? I am astonished I should ever think this a new doctrine, especially while our Articles and Homilies stand unrepealed, and the key of knowledge is not yet taken away.

From this time I endeavoured to ground as many of our friends as came in this fundamental truth, salvation by faith alone, not an idle, dead faith, but a faith which works by love, and is necessarily productive of all good works and all holiness.

I spent some hours this evening in private with Martin Luther, who was greatly blessed to me, especially his conclusion of the second chapter. I laboured, waited, and prayed to see³⁹⁶ "who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*."³⁹⁷ When nature near exhausted forced me to bed, I opened the book upon "For He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon earth." After this comfortable assurance that he would come, and would not tarry, I slept in peace.

³⁹⁵ Kimbrough and Newport (critical ed., 2008), *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 103-104.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., Kimbrough and Newport have "see," but Jackson (1849), and later, Curnock (1909), both have "feel" here. While "feel" would seem to be more suitable to Charles's thinking, I must go with the critical ed. until I have opportunity to examine Charles's ms. Verse 5 of Charles's poem *Free Grace* includes the lines, "*I feel the life his wounds impart; I feel my Saviour in my Heart;*" this verse seems to support Jackson and Curnock.

³⁹⁷ Kimbrough and Newport include the ref. [Gal. 1:6-7], enclosed in brackets within the text, but this reference is apparently a typo; the correct ref. is Gal. 2:20 - *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

True for both brothers, Luther's emphasis on salvation being specifically for *me* will prove to be the key that unlocks their faith, enabling them to be able to believe that Christ has saved, incredibly, *even each of them*: "Amazing love, how can it be / That thou, my God, shouldst die for *me*?" (verse 1, line 5, 1:5). The word *me*, *I*, *my*, and *mine* appear no less than twenty times in this hymn, and emphasizes this conclusion. Charles writes that Luther's commentary on Galatians plays a crucial part of helping him gain an understanding of two important doctrines: on the one hand, Luther helps Charles to see that salvation is by *faith alone* without works.³⁹⁸ On the other hand, salvation is for the individual, that is, for even *me*. In reading through Luther's comments concerning the word *me*, as used in the book of Galatians 2:20, it becomes clear that Charles must have connected with Luther emotionally as well as cognitively, for Luther passionately, yet clearly, pens his thoughts,³⁹⁹ as shown in this sample from Luther:

Wherefore these words, "Which loved me," are full of faith. And he that can utter this word "me," and apply it unto himself with a true and a constant faith, as Paul did, shall be a good disputer with Paul against the law. For he delivered neither sheep, ox, gold, nor silver, but even God himself, entirely and wholly, "for me," even for "me," I say, a miserable and wretched sinner. Now therefore, in that the Son of God was thus delivered to death for me, I take comfort and apply this unto myself. And this manner of applying is the very true force and power of faith.⁴⁰⁰

This hymn, *And Can It Be*, is yet but another reframing of the BCP Psalm 107 by Charles, because the same pattern appears here as well: the sinner has been long bound by sin and unbelief, imprisoned in chains, and finally miraculously delivered. However, in this reframing, Charles emphasizes not the suffering, despair, and misery of the sinner – only two lines are devoted to that subject, as though his new-found joy has caused him to forget his agonizing – but the deliverance and joy of one finally set free. The sheer exuberance of his minutes-old faith shines brightly through and above all suffering; amazement and joy are voiced in a manner that can only be described as gratitude for such a miraculous deliverance. The freshness of his faith is expressed through the exuberance of his hymn, which is one of this writer's favorite hymns.

³⁹⁸ Martin Luther, 1575, *A Commentary of M. Doctor Martin Luther upon the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*. A more readable copy is the reprint of 1891, *A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to The Galatians*; in the reprint Luther uses the phrase "faith alone" 31 times.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 1891, *A Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to The Galatians*, Luther comments on the word *me*, in Gal. 2:20, 178-182; this section strongly emphasizes faith alone as the basis of salvation.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 179.

His is a living faith that enables Charles to exclaim, “I *feel* the life his wounds impart; / I *feel* my Saviour in my Heart” (5:5-6). Here, *feel* means to sense, and to sense through one’s emotional faculties, as was shown above. This aspect of emotional experience⁴⁰¹ will become an important aspect of Wesleyan assurance. Is it possible that the Living God could enter and abide in a human being and that person not know, that is, not *feel* the experience resulting from such an encounter? This writer doubts it. Charles knew that what he had just experienced was real because he could *feel* God in his heart (he is not talking about the muscle in his chest); he knew he was different, he knew he was forgiven, and he knew he was empowered to resist temptation. It is important to stress that the Wesley brothers taught that sanctification comes by faith alone, by taking God at his word, and believing that what God says is true; it does not come about because of a feeling; rather, that feeling is a *result* of sanctification.

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing, Analysis

This Wesley hymn, another of this writer’s favorite hymns, was “apparently written” on the first anniversary of his Aldersgate experience, May 21st, 1739.⁴⁰² Again, it can be seen as yet another reframing of the BCP Psalm 107, for all the same thematic elements are present. The 1740 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* is used here because this version is quite likely the original version as first written by Charles, and therefore may come closest to expressing his thinking and feelings concerning his Aldersgate experience. The emotional content of this poem is quite strong, and therefore stresses the importance of this event to Charles.

One very interesting aspect found in his hymn can be seen in the last two lines of verse three: “My second, real, living life / I then began to live.” This statement implies that this event produced such a dramatic life change in him that he felt that he began to really live an entirely new life. In other words, his saw his Aldersgate experience to be such a monumental event because it had radically altered him. This description perfectly matches the Apostle’s words in Second Corinthians 5:17 –

“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

⁴⁰¹ Luiz Pessoa, 2013, *The Cognitive-Emotional Brain*, 257. Here, Pessoa uses the phrase “emotional experience” and “feelings” interchangeably.

⁴⁰² Franz Hildebrandt, and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., BCE, 7:79-81. The editors have included much interesting technical information in footnotes.

Now he has the peace of God that passes all understanding (verse two) and receives the power of the Holy Spirit (verse four) - to master sin and love his neighbor as Christ loved the Church. This event marks the end of a long period of grieving over his sins (verse three); and he now experiences the peace of God that passes all understanding (verse 9) and joy unspeakable (verse 12).

Here is what Charles has to say about the peace of God that passes all understanding and joy unspeakable:

Dost thou know what religion is? That it is a participation of the divine nature, the life of God in the soul of man: 'Christ in thee, the hope of glory'; 'Christ formed in thy heart,' happiness and holiness; heaven begun upon earth; a 'kingdom of God within thee'," 'not meat and drink', no outward thing, 'but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost';" an everlasting kingdom brought into thy soul, a 'peace of God that passeth all understanding';?⁴⁰³

This joy I therefore called eternal, because the holy scriptures assure us, that it is the same in kind, though not in degree, with that we shall enjoy to eternity. For it should be well observed and always remembered, that heaven is begun upon earth. And accordingly our saviour often means by 'the kingdom of heaven' that temper of mind which a Christian now enjoys. He begins to enjoy it when he begins to be a Christian, when Christ begins to reign in his soul. And the more absolutely he reigns there, the more happiness he enjoys.⁴⁰⁴

Thus, the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences cannot, and must not, be trivialized or discounted, nor can it possibly be deemed to be the greatest tragedy that ever befell the Church! These words penned by Charles received the full approbation of John Wesley, and the roles of emotion that are uncovered in the analysis of Charles's Aldersgate experience are also applicable to John's similar, but not identical, Aldersgate experience.

⁴⁰³ Kenneth Newport, 2001, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, Sermon 8, 218.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., Sermon 3, 126.

*For the Anniversary Day of One's
Conversion* [O for a thousand
tongues to Sing]⁴⁰⁵

1. Glory to God, and praise, and love
Be ever, ever given;
By saints below, and saints above,
The Church in earth and heaven.
2. On this glad day the glorious sun
Of righteousness arose,
On my benighted soul he shone,
And fill'd it with repose.
3. Sudden expir'd the legal strife,
'Twas then I ceas'd to grieve,
My second, real, living life
I then began to live.
4. Then with my *heart* I first believ'd
Believ'd, with faith divine,
Power with the Holy Ghost receiv'd
To call the Saviour *mine*.
5. I felt my LORD's atoning blood
Close to my soul applied;
Me, me he lov'd - the Son of GOD
For *me*, for *me* He died!
6. I found, and own'd his promise
true,
Ascertain'd of *my* part,
My pardon pass'd in heaven I *knew*
When written on my heart.
7. O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my GOD and King,
The triumphs of his grace!
8. My gracious Master, and my GOD,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honours of thy name.
9. Jesus, the name that charms our
fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;

'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

10. He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,
He sets the prisoner free:
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avail'd for me.
11. He speaks; and listening to his voice,
New life the dead receive,
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice.
The humble poor *believe*.
12. Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye
dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy!
13. Look unto him, ye nations, own
Your GOD, ye fallen race;
Look, and be saved, thro' faith alone,
Be justified, by grace!
14. See all your sins on Jesus laid;
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For *every soul* of man.
15. Harlots, and publicans, and thieves
In holy triumph join!
Sav'd is the sinner that believes
From crimes as great as mine.
16. Murtherers, and all ye hellish crew,
Ye sons of lust and pride,
Believe the Saviour died for you;
For me the Saviour died.
17. Awake from guilty nature's sleep,
And CHRIST shall give you light,
Cast all your sins into the deep,
And wash the *Ethiop* white.
18. With me, your chief, ye then shall
know,
Shall feel your sins forgiven;
Anticipate your heaven below,
And own, that love is heaven.

⁴⁰⁵ John Wesley, and Charles Wesley, 1740,
Hymns and Sacred Poems, London: Strahan,
120-123. Italics and small capitals are the
Wesley's.

Newport makes this claim:

As with converts generally, Charles may well have overemphasized the discrepancy between his situation before the experience and that after it, a trap into which some of his commentators may also perhaps have fallen. The imagery of the hymn is dramatic: a soul imprisoned by sin in the darkest dungeonal depths is contrasted with a spirit flying free in the glory of celestial light. The wider corpus of Charles's writings does not support such an absolute and total contrast between his life before May 1738 and that after it.⁴⁰⁶

However, this paper has considered several items from the writings of Charles that contradict his conclusion that "Charles's writings does not support such an absolute and total contrast" before and after his Aldersgate experience. What Newport is saying is that there really is not that much difference between before and after the carnal mind in Charles is fully replaced with the mind of Christ, or before and after the image of Christ is restored in him, or that gifts such as the peace of God which passes all understanding and joy unspeakable are incapable of sustaining the *renewed and energized* Charles Wesley indefinitely, which, of course, is not the case. Charles's ability as a poet includes his ability to fully express his feelings concerning his life-changing experience, an experience that is the culmination of all his life experiences right up to May 21st, 1738, and these writings indicate his change was, indeed, most dramatic.

Newport makes a footnote reference to his above quote that Baker supports his conclusion, but Baker only notes that Charles was, at times, dogged by depression,⁴⁰⁷ and occasionally longs for death. Baker goes on to write that,

Henceforth, however, Whitsuntide was always to be a time of peculiar blessing for him. Underlying the choppy surface of his Christian experience were the calm deeps of his new certainty of God's love for him, a more confident reliance upon that love filling every moment of his life. Gone was the 'desperate spirit' which had dictated his letter from Georgia to 'Varanese'. There was a new enthusiasm, a new glow, a spiritual buoyancy which found its most lasting expression in the lilt of Christian song, but which also revealed itself in his letters.

Charles Wesley now had something about which he wanted to tell the world. Hitherto preaching had been a duty. Now it was a joy - or perhaps we should say an irresistible urge. To him, as to his brother John, addressing great crowds in the open air was a heavy cross, an affront both to his health, his temperament, and to his sense of ecclesiastical propriety.

He wrote to Whitefield in August 1739: I am continually tempted to leave off preaching, and hide myself like J. Hutchins. I should then be freer from temptation, and at leisure to attend my own improvement. God continues to work *by* me, but not *in* me, that I can

⁴⁰⁶ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, 54.

⁴⁰⁷ Charles's bouts with depression will be dealt with later.

perceive. Do not reckon upon me, my brother, in the work God is doing: for I cannot expect He should long employ one who is ever longing and murmuring to be discharged.⁴⁰⁸

Here, Baker actually quotes Charles as only being “*tempted* to leave off preaching,” a temptation that may have brought about some of his occasional bouts of depression, but to which temptation he did not yield. There could be a reason, other than mental illness, for Charles’s depression and that reason will be investigated when John’s depression is discussed, below. I suspect that Charles’s negative comments, immediately above, are due more to a false humility than anything else, for God did in fact “employ” him for the next fifty years! Indeed, Charles’s hymns still live on and are still sung across the world today.

Finally, Newport warns⁴⁰⁹ that “some of his [Charles’s] commentators” have fallen into the trap of overestimating Charles’s Aldersgate experience, and cites Dallimore⁴¹⁰ as an example. However, in reading the cited reference in Dallimore this claim does not seem to be substantiated.

Luther’s theology incorporating personal pronouns is quite evident in the tenor that runs throughout this poem, but especially so in verse five, “*Me, me* he lov’d - the Son of GOD / For *me, for me* He died!” The italics are Charles’s, and the tone in which Charles writes these lines indicates surprise and amazement, as well as awe, humility, and praise to God. John also was equally blessed by Luther’s use of the word *me*, for it is by this means of personalization that Luther helps each of the Wesley brothers to *dare* to apply the gospel message directly to themselves. Verse six culminates in the theme of Charles’s personal application of the gospel (italics are Charles’s):

I found, and own'd his Promise true, / Ascertain'd of *my* part, /
My Pardon pass'd in heaven I *knew* / When written on my heart.”

This stanza reveals that Charles now *experientially* knows that he is forgiven, he knows because Christ’s promise is “written on his heart” – not his mind; in other words, he emotionally senses, feels, God’s forgiveness; therefore, he knows for certain that the great load of sin that he has been carrying for years has been completely forgiven, because he can no longer feel its weight bearing down upon him. The weight is gone! Now verse seven makes sense, for the first six stanzas

⁴⁰⁸ Frank Baker, *Charles Wesley as Revealed by His Letters*, 1948, 33-34. I have underlined portions of Baker’s quotation that undermine Newport’s claim of Bakers support.

⁴⁰⁹ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, 54

⁴¹⁰ Arnold A. Dallimore, *A Heart Set Free, the Life of Charles Wesley*, 1988, 62 ff.

provide the very reasons why he would want “a thousand tongues” in the first place. The first six verses also comprise Charles’s personal testimony of what God had done for him a year earlier. The fact that Charles still feels exactly the same about his experience now, a year later, is a verification of the reality and importance of his Aldersgate experience: Charles is saying that God really did honor his word to abide, and remain, in him, and this is one more way that Charles attests to the reality of the gospel message. This writer can think of no greater change that humanity could possibly experience than having the living and most High God come to live in their hearts.

Having averred what God has done for him in the first six stanzas, verses eight through eighteen outline what God is willing to do for any sinner, especially because God did it for the self-proclaimed “chief of sinners,” Charles, himself (18:1). But more than that, these last eleven verses represent Charles in an intercessory prayer that includes even the dregs of society. His first response to his evangelical conversion of a year earlier was intercessory prayer: “I found myself convinced - I knew not how, nor when - and immediately fell to intercession,⁴¹¹ and a year later his fervor for intercessory prayer has not abated in the least. The fact that more than sixty per cent of this eighteen-stanza poem is dedicated to intercessory prayer attests to not only the importance Charles attributes to this type of prayer, but also to the reality of his Aldersgate experience, itself, which provides the motive force for prayer: God has, indeed, *touch’d* his heart.

Thematically, this hymn provides an excellent reframing of the BCP Psalm 107, as have each of the various works of Charles that have been examined in this paper; these are themes that Charles never forgets. Indeed, the various writings of Charles, all founded upon his incorporation of the BCP Psalm 107 into his testimony, provide a vivid description of his Aldersgate experience, which is none other than Christ’s promised baptism in the Holy Spirit that was recorded by all four evangelists, and to which Charles also refers to as an evangelical conversion or one’s personal Pentecost.

The Role of Emotion in Charles’s Soteriology

The various roles of emotion that are identified in the analysis of Charles Wesley’s soteriology can be equally applicable to John’s soteriology, because, as was

⁴¹¹ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, eds., 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:106-107.

demonstrated, the two brothers, and John Fletcher, worked very closely together as they developed the Wesleyan corpus. Many of the Wesley hymns cannot be positively identified as the exclusive work of either brother, and there is much evidence that confirms a full agreement concerning virtually all of the major points of their individual theological perspectives.

Thus, the analyses of emotion in Charles Wesley's soteriology must not be thought of as exclusively applicable to Charles Wesley; the same is true when the role of emotion in John's soteriology is examined. Indeed, John writes in the preface of the 1780 hymnal, which John published, these words:

4. ... The hymns are not carelessly jumbled together, but carefully ranged under proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians. So that this book is in effect a little body of experimental and practical divinity.

5. As but a small part of these hymns are of my composing, I do not think it inconsistent with modesty to declare that I am persuaded no such hymn-book as this has yet been published in the English language. In what other publication of the kind have you so distinct and full an account of scriptural Christianity? such a declaration of the heights and depths of religion, speculative and practical? so strong cautions against the most plausible errors, particularly those that are now most prevalent? and so clear directions for making our calling and election sure, for perfecting holiness in the fear of God?

8. But to return. What is of infinitely more moment than the spirit of poetry is the spirit of piety. And I trust all persons of real judgment will find this breathing through the whole *Collection*. It is in this view chiefly that I would recommend it to every truly pious reader: as a means of raising or quickening the spirit of devotion, of confirming his faith, of enlivening his hope, and of kindling or increasing his love to God and man. When poetry thus keeps its place, as the handmaid of piety, it shall attain, not a poor perishable wreath, but a crown that fadeth not away.⁴¹²

Here, John is placing his stamp of approval upon all of his brother's poetry, and he is admitting that Charles composed the bulk of these hymns; thus, he justifies the claims of this writer, above.

The Reader's Emotions

One important role of emotion in Wesley's theology involves the personal preferences that *the reader* may bring to a Wesleyan text, because said bias will necessarily influence the reader's interpretation of that text; indeed, this fact explains how different readers arrive at different, even contradictory, interpretations on a continuum ranging from hagiographical to pejorative.

Part of knowing one's self includes developing an awareness of one's preferences and biases, and herein lays the solution to the problem of emotional predilections. Those engaged in textual interpretation must be aware of their own emotional

⁴¹² John Wesley, 1781, 2nd. Ed., *A Collection of Hymns, For The Use Of The People Called Methodists*, Preface, 3-5.

preferences and biases, and also recognize the role played by their own emotions that may identify with that text so that rational judgment prevails, or at a minimum, so that no injury is imparted to that text. Thus, the role played by the reader's emotions becomes a critical component of textual interpretation, and this statement encapsulates the necessity of knowing one's self, and understanding the role of one's own emotions with regard to theological interpretation.

Emotion as a Candidate for Salvation

As has been pointed out, above, one role of emotion in Wesleyan theology is as a candidate for salvation because one's emotional faculties are part and parcel of one's natural, unregenerate nature. One's innate nature, including one's emotional faculties, is set right only through one's personal Aldersgate experience.

Role of Two Emotions

In Charles's Journal entry for May 21st, 1738, two emotions immediately emerge: first, Charles writes that the presence of the Holy Spirit *in* him was *felt*, or sensed emotionally as well as physically - his heart rate increased as a result of experiencing strong emotion. Second, his heart was supernaturally *inflamed with the fire of love*, and this phrase is understandably very emotionally charged by qualifying love with the words *inflamed* and *fire*, words that explain his experience of having a racing heartbeat and desire for intercessory prayer.

John Wesley, in his exposition of a passage in the book of Matthew, writes:

3:11. *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire* – He shall fill you with the Holy Ghost, inflaming your hearts with that fire of love which many waters cannot quench. And this was done, even with a visible appearance as of fire, on the day of Pentecost.⁴¹³

John's comment is an apt, although terse description of what happened to Charles on May 21st, 1738, and he was certainly aware of the fact that fire is one of the symbols that represent the Holy Spirit; without doubt Charles was also aware of this fact. What action, if any, does Charles take just after his evangelical conversion⁴¹⁴? He senses God in him, and "immediately fell to intercession," an action suggesting that his heart was truly "*inflamed with the fire of love*" for others. Charles writes, in his Sermon 7, the following words: "The love of God is shed abroad in all believers'

⁴¹³ Italics are Wesley's.

⁴¹⁴ The phrases *evangelical conversion*, *Aldersgate experience*, *personal Pentecost*, and now *the baptism in the Holy Spirit* are fully interchangeably through this paper.

hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them,”⁴¹⁵ and Charles’s intercessory prayer is this statement put into immediate action.

The role of the emotion called love is complex because it accomplishes more than one purpose, and it is also bidirectional in that it is transmitted from God to the recipient, and in turn is retransmitted from the recipient to God. Furthermore, the same bidirectional action can occur between the recipient and other people; at the very least, love is, or should be, transmitted from the recipient to other people. There is much theological misunderstanding concerning the meaning of the word love, and for this reason the meanings of this polysemous word has been extensively dealt with in Chapter One. Therefore, looking at the context in which love occurs here, it can be seen that Charles qualifies his meaning of love by using this word in a phrase: *the love of God*, which phrase is found no less than forty three times throughout his sermons.⁴¹⁶

It is the emotion of love that motivates one, like a spring-board, to have real, as opposed to dead, faith in God, or as Charles puts it,

'Another faith there is in scripture which is not idle, unfruitful, and dead, but worketh by love... This is the true, lively, and unfeigned Christian faith, and is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but it liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart. And this faith is not without hope and trust in God; nor without the love of God and of our neighbour; nor without the fear of God; nor without the desire to hear God's word and to follow the same in eschewing evil and doing gladly all good works.'⁴¹⁷

Thus, it is the role of the emotion called love (that we have from and for God) to move Christians to have a living faith in God; likewise it is the role of the emotion called love that we have for our neighbor to move Christians to be kind and merciful to them.

Emotion in Psalm 107

Frijda (1927-2015) presents a learned discussion on the relationships between emotion and “action readiness” or motivation (to act). He says that such terms as

hunger, desire, admiration, greed, lust, enthusiasm, love, hate, tenderness, affection, [and] delight... are of a distinct motivational nature. At the same time, what they refer to conforms to the definition of emotion: the states referred to imply action readiness change; they manifest themselves in control-precedence claims and persistence; and they become manifest in activated behavior and arousal *when meeting difficulty*. Many authors indeed have classified them as emotions.

⁴¹⁵ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, Sermon 7, 202.

⁴¹⁶ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., *Sermon 5, Titus 3: 8*, 155.

There is no contradiction here, nor any place for a conflict of opinions. Emotion and motivation are not coordinate concepts [that is, they do not *complement* each other]. If emotions are defined as changes in action readiness, action tendency included, the states referred to *are* emotions. At the same time, they are motivational states, or they reflect motivational states.⁴¹⁸

This writer has extracted and delineated certain *emotional metaphoric* phrases from the BCP Psalm 107, phrases such as “having heaviness of heart; falling down and having no help; being in distress, darkness, and the shadow of death; being shackled and imprisoned behind gates of brass, and bars of iron,” and so forth, phrases arising due to meeting difficulty, and the emotions expressed through these metaphors become the motivators, or motivations, for the behavioral change that one needs... say, to turn to God as the *only* genuine source relief. In other words, during times of stress *when all else fails*, the only option remaining is turning to God for relief, and that is exactly what the Wesley brothers each chose to do as they passed through their respective, similar, Aldersgate experiences; Psalm 107, and the various writings of Charles Wesley that have been examined in this paper, beautifully illustrate the details of this option.

Here, in the BCP and the selected writings of Charles presented in this paper, the role of these emotions that are expressed in words such as despair, depression, despondency, and the like, is to motivate the severing of all connections to all earthly help or self-sufficiency, to “throw away the oars and jump out of the boat,” connections that block deliverance through obtaining God’s salvation from sin; in other words, the role that these emotions play is to lead miserable sinners to utter dependency upon God alone so that they are *able* to receive relief through their salvation from sin.⁴¹⁹ When Charles says, “You must despair before you can hope,”⁴²⁰ he means that one must relinquish all hope that is not placed in God, and all trust in one’s own works; tasks that, as has been seen, are not easily accomplished; despair then becomes the motivator to do just that because one must learn the hard way by experience that everything else that one tries is simply counterproductive to one’s goal of seeking relief and salvation. Thus, despair and striving are among the main emotional motivators driving all three founders of

⁴¹⁸ Nico Henry Frijda, 1986, *The Emotions, Studies in Emotion & Social Interaction*, 83-85. Italics and brackets are mine, for emphasis.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid. Frijda (1927-2015) is a cognitive, or “information processing perspective (front fly leaf)” theoretician and sees emotion in terms of “action readiness,” or precursors to action, 72.

⁴²⁰ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, “Sermon 4, I John 3:14,” 144. Underline is mine.

Methodism each to their own individual Aldersgate experience, an experience that is customized by God to meet each individual's own need and situation.

Indeed, after his Aldersgate experience Charles says,

Out of the deep must you call upon him, for it is from thence only that he will hear your voice: *out of the depth* of invincible sin and *remorseful misery*. You must own and feel yourselves to be utterly lost without Christ, to be lost, undone and damned forever. But from the moment you discern this, there is nothing can pluck you out of his hand;' for (as an excellent author speaks), 'no soul can be lost that can truly humble itself before God, and pray to his mercy to be helped, saved and redeemed in such a manner as it shall please him. Let it be hid or buried or imprisoned where it will, hell and earth, death and darkness, and everything must give way to the soul thus converted to God; that has no confidence of its own; *that sees nothing of its own but sin*, and that desires and calls upon God to save it by some miracle of his own mercy and goodness. By this *sensibility* of the want [need] of a Saviour, and by this humble conversion and application to God for him, all *chains are broken off*, all *wounds are healed*, and the soul must infallibly find, if it continues to seek, its salvation in the unknown depth and riches of the divine mercy.'⁴²¹

The carnal mind of the sinner dies hard; it will struggle unceasingly in order to preserve itself. Just as the carnal mind struggles to preserve itself, so God struggles with the sinner by moving the sinner to give permission *to allow* God to put his carnal mind to death; thus, the arena for this spiritual battle is set, the actual battle is described in Psalm 107 and the various other documents that have been examined in this thesis thus far, which describes a series of steps consisting of falling away from God followed by deliverance by God. In this quote from Charles, above, he writes that everything begins with our “*sensibility of* [becoming aware of] the want of [need for] a Saviour;” this paper has explored the Wesley brothers use of the word *sensibility* and shown that this term refers to emotional and cognitive awareness; a phenomenon is emotionally sensed, and then reason makes sense of that phenomenon. By *sensibility*, Charles is indicating more than logically (cognitively) being aware of his need; he feels, with his heart, or in twenty-first century parlance, he senses his need emotionally, and this type of sensation is a much stronger motivating force than is just merely being cognitively aware of that need.

But what does the carnal mind look like that such a mighty battle, as we have seen in these documents, might be required? How might one describe the carnal mind? Charles describes *unregenerate humanity* in terms of the starting point for such a battle:

⁴²¹ Ibid., 144-145.

The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not [subject] to the law of God, neither indeed can be. All the powers of man are totally depraved. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in him, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores: his understanding is darkened, his will perverse, his affections set on earthly things. Pride and concupiscence make up his wretched composition; and if you take away that spark of God which was restored to him at his redemption, there remains in him nothing but pure beast and devil.⁴²²

That this infection is, and remains, both in the unregenerate and regenerate, our own church teaches us...⁴²³

Before a man is thus deeply sensible of his misery, all attempts to remove it must prove vain and unfruitful. Before he can take one step towards his divine physician, he must know and confess and groan under his disease.' He must acknowledge it is by him incurable, and in a just despair go out of himself for a remedy.⁴²⁴

Therefore, with a *disease* this severe, a commensurate *cure* is required... once the sufferer realizes his true condition: re-equipped with the carnal mind, humanity has reduced itself to being capable of only learning the hard way, a way that traverses heartache, distress, darkness, imprisonment and despair; for, as Charles writes above, "He must acknowledge it is by him incurable, and in a just despair go out of himself for a remedy," that is, he must divest himself of any supposed innate ability to rescue himself; he must not only throw away the oars, but also jump out of the boat, so to speak.

It is only through these troubles, such as those identified in the BCP Psalm 107, if they should become great enough, that Charles realizes that God's cure can finally become efficacious, because no other cure works! It is through humanity's emotional systems that one senses and then, and only then, cognitively interprets what has happened to one, and thus becomes motivated take appropriate action; logic has no influence for good on the carnal mind, "because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it *is* not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," a verse with which Charles is intimately familiar.⁴²⁵

Charles said, in his quote above, "All the powers [faculties] of man are totally depraved,"⁴²⁶ including the mind and the emotions, and for this reason she/he is unable to help him/herself. Now it can be seen that an indispensable role played by such emotions as despair and misery in the Wesleys' soteriology is to induce the individual to discard all self-reliance, self-trust, as well as one's own works

⁴²² Ibid., "Sermon 7, Rom. 3:23, 24, 25," 188. Brackets are Newport's.

⁴²³ Ibid., 189.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 196.

⁴²⁵ Romans 8:7.

⁴²⁶ Newport, Sermon 7, 188. Brackets mine.

righteousness as one pursues one's desire for healing and wholeness, and the restoration of the image of God in one. Once the carnal mind has finally been allowed to die through the agency of the Holy Spirit, and the seeker receives, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the mind of Christ in exchange, "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."⁴²⁷ Charles speaks of this special type of peace four times in his sermons; of which in one, in Sermon five, he writes in terms of assurance that one really has received new life through an Aldersgate experience:

The first of these [signs] is reconciliation with God attested by an inward peace of conscience, even the peace of God which passeth all understanding, bequeathed unto us by our parting Lord. This immediately springs from a sense of forgiveness; faith, pardon and peace...⁴²⁸

Charles explicitly delineates that the peace of God is sensed through one's conscience, of which much more will be presented below. The conscience, as will be shown, speaks to its owner through his emotional faculties; the owner of that conscience experiences emotional peace and the feeling of wellbeing with respect to her internal spiritual condition, irrespective of external conditions. Therefore, the role of emotion in this case is to first assure Christians that they really have been saved, and second, to strongly encourage Christians to persevere in Christ.

The documents that have been examined so far include emotional metaphors such as great joy; satisfaction and fullness of soul; of receiving the goodness of the Lord, and deliverance from great adversity; of healing and gladness, and peace and safety; of receiving great blessings, and prosperity; and again of receiving joy, and the love of God. The emotional content for the recipient includes joy, satisfaction, fullness, blessings, gladness, peace, prosperity, and the love of God; this long list can be summarized as joy, peace, and love. In this writer's reframing of Psalm 107, the sailor is surprised and filled with great joy as he is miraculously and unexpectedly saved from total destruction. Now the list of positive emotional content grows to joy, peace, love, and joyful surprise.

In Charles's poem, *The Bloody Issue Cured*, he paints the picture of a sinner whose entire nature and soul, in all its aspects, is filled with a humanly incurable, loathsome disease called sin, and describes that person as filled with grief, pain and

⁴²⁷ Philippians 4:7

⁴²⁸ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, "Sermon 5, Titus 3:8," 174.

suffering; yet one who is also capable of receiving faith through the means of, in Wesleyan terms, the prevenient grace of God that is given to lost sinners by the Holy Spirit. Charles's poem, which, in addition to reframing the BCP Psalm 107, is also a reframing of the story found in the gospel of Mark (5:34 ff.), that tells how the believer receives complete healing by just spiritually touching the hem of Jesus' garment in faith (vv. 6, 10, 11, 12). In doing so, *in faith, in taking God at his word*, the sinner not only receives "the sovereign antidote" (v. 13) but also the love of God, which, when received, becomes the assurance that God has, indeed, healed the believer (vv. 13, 14). Charles uses the word *feel*, meaning to sense, four times (9;6, 10;3, 12;5 (2X)); felt once (15;4); touch or touch'd five times (6;5, 8;4, 10;1, 12;2, 14;4): these sensuous terms all contain emotional concepts or motivators.

Charles's rendering of his Psalm 107 also reveals that the redeemed sinner receives, and feels (v. 4, 8, 12, 17) peace (v. 3, 7, 16), joy (v. 4, 8, 12, 16, 17), love (v. 8, 12, 17, 21, 26), happiness (v. 13), gratitude (v. 13), and cheer (v. 24). What role(s) does an emotion such as joy, peace, love, happiness, gratitude, or cheer play in the life of the healed believer? It is not surprising that the same emotions, or emotional motivators, occur in all four of the texts examined, since the last three texts each reframe the original BCP text (Psalm 107). It can now be readily seen that these emotions, or, in the words of Frijda,⁴²⁹ motivators implying action readiness change, is to motivate the sinner: to encourage him or her to remain with, and grow in, Christ, and to give assurance, or attestation, to the sinner that she or he has been truly saved from destruction.

John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience

While the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences are quite similar they are not identical; they realized that God, in his sovereignty, customizes each Aldersgate experience to meet the individual needs and situation of the recipient. Furthermore, it has been shown in this paper that the entire cumulative lifetime experience of the individual contributes to that person's Aldersgate experience. Neither brother ever made the demand that their followers conform to a particular standard Aldersgate experience; rather, their own experiences generated *patterns* that provides guidance for others.

⁴²⁹ Nico Henry Frijda, 1986, *The Emotions*, 83-85.

John graphically realizes his more than ten-year spiritual and mental battle, which he deems his “struggle between nature and grace” as he reflects on his time in Savannah, Georgia, is real-life mortal combat:

9. All the time I was at Savannah I was thus ‘beating the air’. Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which by a living faith in him bringeth salvation ‘to every one that believeth’, I sought to establish my own righteousness, and so laboured in the fire all my days. I was now properly ‘under the law’; I knew that ‘the law’ of God was ‘spiritual’; ‘I consented to it that it was good.’ Yea, ‘I delighted in it, after the inner man.’ Yet was I ‘carnal, sold under sin’. Every day was I constrained to cry out, ‘What I do, I allow not; for what I would I do not, but what I hate, that I do.’ ‘To will is indeed present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not.’ For ‘the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.’ ‘I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me,’ even the ‘law in my members warring against the law of my mind’, and still ‘bringing me into captivity to the law of sin’.

10. In this vile, abject state of bondage to sin I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin: now it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome and in heaviness. Sometimes I overcame and was in joy. For as in the former state I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace (which had now continued above ten years) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble; I had many sensible⁶³ [Ward and Heitzenrater’s footnote] comforts, which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still ‘under the law’, not ‘under grace’ (the state most who are called Christians are content to live and die in); for I was only ‘striving with’, not ‘freed from sin’. Neither had I ‘the witness of the Spirit with my spirit’. And indeed could not; for I ‘sought it not by faith, but (as it were) by the works of the law’.

⁶³ [Ward and Heitzenrater’s Footnote] Wesley normally used the word ‘sensible’ in its primary meaning of ‘perceptible by the senses’ rather than that of ‘making sense’, which Samuel Johnson claimed in 1755 was used only in ‘low conversation’. [Ward and Heitzenrater’s footnote; this writer had independently reached this same conclusion.]⁴³⁰

The same elements that Charles expresses concerning his struggle can also be seen in John’s pre-Aldersgate description of his combat, above. Whereas the poet of Methodism often expresses himself through poetic metaphor, John’s nature is to write logically in descriptive prose, although John’s poetic ability can be seen even in his prose as he occasionally uses such poetic phrases as “this whole struggle between nature and grace.” Both men use liberal amounts of Scripture in their respective narrations.

As with Charles, John’s battle hinges mainly on his dependency on his works to earn his salvation; he identifies when and where he first absorbed this teaching:

⁴³⁰ John Wesley, W. Reginald Ward, and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds, *Works of John Wesley, Journals and Diaries*, BCE 18:246-247. Only underlining mine.

1. I believe, till I was about ten years old I had not sinned away that ‘washing of the Holy Ghost’ which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught that I could only be saved *by universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God*, in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed.³² And those instructions, so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience or holiness I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the law as I was of the gospel of Christ.

³² This process is described below, in Susanna Wesley’s own words; JWJ, Aug. 1, 1742 (letter of July 24, 1732, cf. 25:330-31 in this edn.) [This footnote is Ward’s and Heitzenrater’s.]⁴³¹

John is careful to absolve his mother, who inadvertently teaches him salvation by works, as indicated by italics, above, when he relates that he remembered none of his mother’s holiness teaching. The reason for the brothers’ dependency on works righteousness now becomes manifestly clear: they learned it first when they sat on their mother’s knee; the necessity for many years of struggle also becomes apparent: their mother, who was a loving but strict disciplinarian, was their teacher. Their emotional bonds of love to their mother, difficult bonds, indeed, to breach if works-righteousness is to be discarded, was exceeded only by their later mature love of God. Thus, they each struggled for many years in their endeavor to find the right basis for their salvation; a struggle that this writer, also, engaged in for ten years after he committed his life to Christ.

As with Charles, John’s day of salvation included fortuitous, or rather, providential Bible readings that held special meaning for him now that he understood that the basis of salvation is by grace and faith⁴³² alone:

I continued thus to seek [saving faith] (though with strange indifference, dullness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on those words: ... ‘There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature.’ Just as I went out I opened it again on those words, ‘Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.’ In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul’s. The anthem was, ‘Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee; therefore thou shalt be feared. [. . .] O Israel, trust in the Lord: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.’⁴³³

As the BCE editors point out in footnotes to this quote, John quotes from the Gospel of Mark 12:34, and the book of Psalms 130:1-4, 78, as found in the BCP.

⁴³¹ Ibid., 242-243. Italics are Wesley’s.

⁴³² Ibid., 248, § 12.

⁴³³ Ibid., 249, § 13. Brackets and parentheses are Wesley’s.

John relates that he went to St. Paul's Cathedral and listened attentively to the anthem that was being sung, where he applies its meaning to himself and his search for the indwelling God, just as Charles had similarly appropriated the BCP Psalm 107 to understand and describe his own conversion experience.

Just as Charles is indebted to Luther's comments on the *book of Galatians* for his new understanding of faith alone and for applying the gospel personally to himself, so John owes much to Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans* for these same truths as he relates his moment of special blessing through his Aldersgate experience:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.⁴³⁴

Please note that John, like Charles, within a Moravian context emotionally senses – feels – these things: his “heart [is] strangely warmed,” his feelings tells him that he does “trust in Christ,” and he has received divine *assurance* that he, himself, is now *personally* saved from damnation. John's reference to his heart, rather than his head, is a clear indication of the emotional aspect of his Aldersgate experience; when he says, “I felt my heart strangely warmed,” that is his initial way, immediately after his Aldersgate experience, of expressing the newly kindled love for God that he now, suddenly, *feels* in his heart for God.⁴³⁵

After a year of reflection, in a Journal entry he refines what he meant by having his heart warmed:

July 22-31, 1739. Having *A Caution against Religious Delusion* [London, 1739] put into my hands about this time, I thought it my duty to write to the author of it, [Henry Stebbing (1687-1763)] which I accordingly did, in the following terms:

...

[Out of one's Aldersgate experience] will spring many other things which till then he experienced not, as the love of God, shed abroad in his heart, that peace of God which passeth all understanding, and joy in the Holy Ghost, joy though not *unfelt*, yet *unspeakable* and full of glory.

7. These are some of those *inward* 'fruits of the Spirit', which must be *felt*, wheresoever they are. And without these I cannot learn from Holy Writ that any man is 'born of the Spirit'. I beseech you, sir, by the mercies of God, that if as yet you 'know nothing of such inward feelings', if you do not 'feel in yourself these mighty workings of the Spirit of Christ', at

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 249-250, § 14. Italics are Wesley's.

⁴³⁵ Quotation marks indicate Wesley's language; see this thesis, 121fn 397, for additional details.

least you would not contradict and blaspheme. When the Holy Ghost hath fervently kindled your love towards God, you will know these to be very *sensible* [capable of being sensed] operations. As you ‘hear the wind, and feel it too’, while it ‘strikes upon your bodily organs’, you will know you are under the guidance of God’s Spirit the same way, namely, by *feeling it in your soul*: by the present peace and joy and love which you feel within, as well as by its outward and more distant effects.

I am, etc. [the Rev. John Wesley]⁴³⁶

The underlined phrase from Wesley’s Journal succinctly describes what John meant when he said, “I felt my heart strangely warmed:” the Holy Spirit had kindled in his heart a love for God so strong that it would *never* be extinguished. Additionally, Wesley includes the presence and importance of emotions that were generated by this experience.

Wesley emphatically writes that

7. These are some of those *inward* ‘fruits of the Spirit’, which must be *felt*, wheresoever they are. And without these [felt, inward fruits,] I cannot learn from Holy Writ that any man is ‘born of the Spirit’.

Wesley explains that, just as one can, and must, feel the wind blow, so can one necessarily *feel* the breath of the Holy Spirit moving in one’s heart. Please recall that Damasio says that feelings are emotions that are internalized. The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness,⁴³⁷ and each fruit has a definite emotional aspect. In this same letter, John also writes that a heart full of that faith, which working by love, produces all holiness of *conversation*, that is, all holiness in one’s behavior and speech. Now it can be seen that one role played by these various emotions just depicted, and the role of an Aldersgate experience, itself, is to generate holiness and wholeness in every true Christian.

Now it can also be seen as to why it is so important to rebut one of the conclusions reached in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*,⁴³⁸ because the main effect of John Wesley’s experience is to produce that holiness of heart needed in order to lead a simple, Christian life, that is, a Christian life, that is *unmixed* with unbelief, greed, avarice, jealousy, lust, et cetera, or, in a word, sin. The suggestion that the Wesley brothers’ Aldersgate experiences, from the vantage point just presented, above, are destructive to Christian growth is clearly *diametrically opposed* to genuine

⁴³⁶ JWJ, BCE 19:85-86. Italics are Wesley’s; underlining and brackets are mine.

⁴³⁷ Galatians 5:22.

⁴³⁸ See this thesis, 20; Boetcher: rebuttal is necessary in order to maintain the integrity of this thesis

Christian development. Indeed, an Aldersgate experience, for the reasons just stated above, is not an optional choice for any Christian.⁴³⁹

Furthermore, these sensate experiences meet and confirm the expectations that had been developing in him ever since his conversations with Peter Böhler:

In my return to England, January 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true, living faith, was the ‘one thing needful’ for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was *wholly void of this faith*, but only thought *I had not enough* of it. So that when Peter Böhler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ (which is but one) that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, ‘dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness’, I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might and laboured to prove that faith might be where these were not, especially where that sense of forgiveness was not. For all the Scriptures relating to this I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all ‘Presbyterians’ who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw no one could (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness and not feel it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this,^e [Wesley footnote] all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

^e There is no *Christian* faith without it [added as a footnote, by Wesley, in 1775].⁴⁴⁰

Wesley’s paragraph, immediately above, sets the stage for a proper interpretation of his Aldersgate experience; it is not the *quantity* of faith, but the *quality* of faith that is important; that is, John had faith in God but Christ had been left out of the equation, a major error in his thinking, indeed. Second, Böhler led him to expect “dominion over sin,” and to experience a “constant peace from a sense of forgiveness.”

As Charles explains so clearly in many of his hymns and poems, this “constant peace [resulting] from a sense of forgiveness” is felt, or emotionally sensed, in and through one’s conscience. Indeed, this sensate experience that is described by Charles becomes part and parcel of God’s response to John’s plea. In Sermon 3, *Awake, Thou That Sleepest*, a sermon written by Charles, and with which John fully agreed and valued enough so as to include it in the publication of his *Sermons on Several Occasions* (1746);⁴⁴¹ Charles preaches the following statement:

⁴³⁹ This writer recognizes all of the authors of *Aldersgate Reconsidered* as his Christian brothers and sisters; furthermore he emphatically **does not** impugn their person, character, or motives, and he believes they have been, and are, sincere and honest. To err is human, and at most a minor sin, of which this author also has been, at times, guilty.

⁴⁴⁰ JWJ, BCE 18 247-248, § 11. Italics and parentheses are Wesley’s, underlining is mine, footnote e and brackets are Ward’s and Heitzenrater’s.

⁴⁴¹ Op. cit., Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, “Introduction,” 43.

Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you, and 'suffer ye the word of exhortation', even from one the least esteemed in the church. Your conscience beareth you witness in the Holy Ghost that these things are so, 'if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious'. 'This is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.' This experimental knowledge,¹⁷⁸ [Ward's and Heitzenrater's footnote] and this alone, is true Christianity. He is a Christian who hath received the Spirit of Christ. He is not a Christian who hath not received him. Neither is it possible to have received him and not know it. For 'at that day' (when he cometh, saith the Lord) 'ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.' This is that 'Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.'⁴⁴²

¹⁷⁸ Note the implied either/or here; this, too, will soften as the Revival matures. [Ward's and Heitzenrater's footnote.]

He is emphasizing the role of one's conscience in salvation. In this sermon, written in 1742,⁴⁴³ Ward and Heitzenrater note that Charles takes an "either/or" stance on salvation, but that he will soften his position as he matures. Of particular interest for this paper, Charles continues to clarify his thoughts in this sermon concerning sensing the indwelling Holy Spirit.

III.7. He is antichrist whosoever denies the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, or that the indwelling Spirit of God is the common privilege of all believers, the blessing of the gospel, the unspeakable gift, the universal promise, the criterion of a real Christian.

8. It nothing helps them to say, 'We do not deny the *assistance* of God's Spirit, but only this *inspiration*, this "receiving the Holy Ghost" and being *sensible* of it. It is only this *feeling* of the Spirit, this being *moved* by the Spirit, or *filled* with it, which we deny to have any place in sound religion.' But in 'only' denying this you deny the whole Scriptures, the whole truth and promise and testimony of God.

9. Our own excellent Church knows nothing of this devilish distinction; but speaks plainly of 'feeling the Spirit of Christ'; of being 'moved by the Holy Ghost', and knowing and 'feeling there is no other name than that of Jesus whereby we can receive any salvation'. She teaches us also to pray for the 'inspiration of the Holy Spirit', yea, that we may be 'filled with the Holy Ghost'. Nay, and every presbyter of hers professes to 'receive the Holy Ghost by the imposition of hands'. Therefore to deny any of these is in effect to renounce the Church of England, as well as the whole Christian revelation.

10. But 'the wisdom of God' was always 'foolishness with men'.⁴⁴⁴

Here, John, through his full agreement with Charles's sermon, describes, in exquisite detail, the nature and reality of "being sensible," that is, of emotionally sensing the Spirit of God in us, through the faculty of our conscience. When God indwells us, we sense it, and indubitably know it; John recalls that the teaching of the Anglican Church fully supports this doctrine. The role of emotion in John's experience is exactly the same as is seen in Charles's experience: it is through the

⁴⁴² John Wesley, in Albert C Outler, ed., BCE 1:154. Parentheses are Wesley's.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 708.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 1:155-156. Italics are Wesley's.

medium of one's emotions that assurance, encouragement, and a peaceful conscience are felt by the one who has received the Holy Spirit.

The language John used throughout the material excerpted in this section, including his approval of Sermon three material, is crystal clear and unambiguous; the fact that it is heartfelt is also plainly evident. Like his contemporary Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley is not known as an emotional preacher, but he does speak passionately, and he can elicit an emotive response in the listener. It is his passion that lends credibility to his written sermons in such a way as to connect with the reader even three centuries later.

Fire In The Pulpit

It is the emotion expressed within John Wesley's account of his experience of the risen Christ that drives his narrative and elicits a response in the reader today.

Please remember, emotion is not the opposite of reason and rationality; emotion is different than reason, yet it is part and parcel of reason's very substance. The idea of communicating the gospel in an emotion-free factual manner is a fallacy.⁴⁴⁵

Indeed, Morgan understood this fact when he preached that, "indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit."⁴⁴⁶ It cannot be said that the Wesley brothers' listeners were "indifferent!" Without the Wesley Brothers' passion, they surely would have failed to reach those listeners. Charles's writings contain the passion of a poet; John, in his own way, is not less than his brother in this respect, even though he primarily utilizes the medium of prose.

Thomas Cook (1859-1912), an evangelical, spirit-filled Methodist preacher, in his book *Soul-saving Preaching*, undated but published in 1890, attributes the quote above, verbatim, to Morgan:

At a recent Southport Convention, in an address to ministers, Dr. Campbell Morgan laid down the dictum, 'Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit,' and a few years ago the Editor of the British Weekly attributed the lack of pulpit effectiveness to a decay of passion. It is a thankless task to join in the too common wail concerning the character of the modern pulpit, but truth demands the admission that much of our present-day preaching is missing fire, for the very sufficient reason that our souls lack the holy passion which characterized the preaching of the early Methodists.

Cook continues:

⁴⁴⁵ Matthew Elliott, 2006, *Faithful feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*, p.266. I have paraphrased parts of this paragraph in order to apply it to Wesley. The original paragraph is on the frontispiece of this thesis.

⁴⁴⁶ A. Skevington Wood, 1967, *The Burning Heart*, 13, citing G. Campbell Morgan, 1937, "Preaching," 54. However, this quote is not found in Morgan's *Preaching*. See Frontispiece, fn. 2.

There is an undercurrent of suspicion abroad that much of the preaching of today is but a make-believe, and that suspicion is due to the formal, lifeless manner in which the duties of the preacher are too often performed. How can a man really believe in the great, solemn, eternal verities that he preaches without being thrilled with intense emotion to the very core of his being? Who can tell how much such a reflection as this has to do with the prevailing alienation of so many of the people from our Churches?⁴⁴⁷

Here, Cook reaches the heart of the matter concerning passion in the pulpit: it is not passion, *per se*, that is needed in the pulpit, but a Spirit-filled preacher who is *animated* by the Holy Spirit. The reason for the Wesley brothers' passion in their sermons is that they have experienced that of which they preach, as has been amply proven in this paper; the source of their passion is the joy of the Holy Spirit which is in them, and which overflows into their sermon, a joy that enlivens them and energizes their listeners.

Of course, *Fire in the pulpit* is a metaphor, for fire is one of many symbols for the Holy Spirit, and therefore, this metaphor means that the preacher is preaching under the unction of the Holy Spirit; nothing less will do. Thus, it is vital that the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences, which are one and the same with Luke's statement, below, be passed on to each generation:

3:16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

Far from being a disaster, as some would call it,⁴⁴⁸ the brothers' Aldersgate experiences encapsulate the very essence of their preaching, and reveal the source of their powerful and emotive, rather than emotional, messages. It is Christ in them, through the baptism in the Holy Spirit which they received during their Aldersgate experiences, who is responsible for their astounding success, as they would readily admit. It is also Christ in the listener, by means of prevenient grace, who enables the listener's response to the gospel message of *sola fide*.

Cook, a Methodist evangelist with many years of experience, goes on to enumerate what is needed in order to reach souls, and this catalog is an apt description of John and Charles Wesley:

The preacher has more to do than to furnish the mind with facts. He has to appeal to the conscience, to touch the heart, to capture the will, and change the whole course of life.

⁴⁴⁷ Op. cit., 51-52. Underlining mine.

⁴⁴⁸ Chapter 1, pp. 20-27, deals with opinions expressed in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, 1990, Randy Maddox, ed.

Simulated passion will never accomplish this. Even the dullest hearer can detect the difference between that which is assumed and that which is real. It is only the glow of a heart on fire, in touch with the heart of the living God, that can quicken dead souls into newness of life. The earnestness we need is that which results from the Spirit of God so permeating the whole man in every thought, word, and expression, that he is able to transmit his own keen, vivid sense of the reality of Divine and eternal things to his hearers, and win them for God.

Dread emotion as we may, it remains a fact that the will is never stirred to action until one or other of the emotions is kindled. Few can follow an abstruse argument, but all can feel. It is not enough to inculcate truth upon the intellect; the preacher must sway the sensibilities which lie nearest to the will. It is greater to move a man than to teach him. A candle may illuminate an ironstone rock, but only a furnace can melt it. An unregenerate intellect, well read in theology and trained in rhetoric, may preach a popular sermon, but only the soul aglow with the live coal from off the altar can arouse the conscience and change the current of the human will. Passion stirs passion, emotion kindles emotion, and only men who are at white-heat make any deep and lasting impression. "I ought" may be the dictate of reason, but "I must" is the cry of strong emotion, and the will obeys the latter rather than the former.⁴⁴⁹

Cook was not a psychologist, but he understood human nature and what it takes to move people toward Christ; this writer can find no fault with his psychology. Likewise, John and Charles Wesley were not psychologists, but under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and with the new nature and mind that they received, each through their own Aldersgate experience, they, as well as Cook, now innately know these things, and apply these principles in their ministries; this writer finds no flaw in their psychological understanding of these truths. The above two lengthy paragraphs, written by a true Wesleyan preacher, have been distilled by that author from a lifetime of his experience under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit. In these two paragraphs, the overarching role of emotion in Wesley's soteriology (and perhaps in any other theology, also) is showcased for all plainly to see, as will be summarized in chapter four.

This writer has deliberately used the word psychology because its eighteenth-century meaning is quite applicable to this discussion. In 1654, Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654) translated a Latin work written by Simeon Partlicius (fl. 1620-1624) that includes the first known use and definition of the word *psychologie*: "the knowledg (sic) of the Soul."⁴⁵⁰ This definition held nearly through the eighteenth century. As with the word *emotion*, the meaning of *psychology* was gradually

⁴⁴⁹ Thomas Cook (1859-1912), 1890, *Soul-saving Preaching*, 52-53. Underlining is mine.

⁴⁵⁰ Simeon Partlicius, 1654, *A New Method of Physick: or, a short view of Paracelsus and Galens practise: in 3 treatises. ... Written in Latin by Simeon Partlicius, Phylosopher, and Physitian in Germany. Translated into English by Nicholas Culpeper*, 168.

stripped of its spiritual connotation. The OED⁴⁵¹ provides two meanings for this word. First, psychology is, as has just been presented, “the study or consideration of the soul or spirit.” Second, psychology is

the scientific study of the nature, functioning, and development of the human mind, including the faculties of reason, emotion, perception, communication, etc.; the branch of science that deals with the (human or animal) mind as an entity and in its relationship to the body and to the environmental or social context, based on observation of the behaviour of individuals or groups of individuals in particular (ordinary or experimentally controlled) circumstances.

This writer has no quarrel with scientists wanting to divest their work from the numinous, because science can only investigate the temporal realm. This writer does have differences with those in the various fields of science who make the claim that the numinous does not exist. He is aware of the arguments concerning dualism and science’s disavowal of dualism does not present a problem in using science in this paper; science’s disavowal of the possibility of dualism does. Wesley was a strong dualist, yet this author finds his theology, particularly that which concerns the soul and emotions, to be perfectly applicable, and understandable, today.

It has been one of the express purposes of this inquiry to explore the role of emotion in hopes of providing illustrations of how *passion* can return to the Wesleyan pulpit in such a way as to arouse a legitimate, emotive response in the hearer, and to demonstrate that it is the emotion that is aroused in the listener which moves, or motivates, that listener to reach out to Christ. This section, built upon the foundation of the entirety of what has been written up to this point, will be judged by the reader as to whether or not this goal has been met.

Emotion and Conscience

It has just been demonstrated that the goal of the *emotive* evangelist, animated by the Holy Spirit, is to “arouse the conscience and change the current of the human will”,⁴⁵² of his listeners. It must be emphasized that the evangelist or preacher must be emotive rather than emotional. The emotive preacher can reach out and communicate meaningfully with others on an emotional level; the preacher’s excitement about the sermon’s subject is transferred in such a way as to motivate the listener to action, whereas the emotional preacher only openly displays his own

⁴⁵¹ “psychology, n.”. OED Online. January 2018. Oxford University Press.
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.asburyseminary.edu/view/Entry/153907?redirectedFrom=psychology&>
 (accessed February 22, 2018).

⁴⁵² Thomas Cook (1859-1912), 1890, *Soul-saving Preaching*, 53.

feelings. The transference of mere knowledge seldom motivates a sinner to turn to Christ for cleansing; it is the proper function of emotion to initiate that motivation.

Pricking The Conscience

Outler writes a succinct, but accurate, summation of Wesley's order of salvation that is pertinent to this discussion.

The order of salvation, as Wesley had come to see it, is an organic continuum: **conscience**, conviction of sin, repentance, reconciliation, regeneration, sanctification, glorification. All of these are progressive stages in the divine design to restore the image of God in human selves and society.⁴⁵³

Some have objected to Outler's statement, above, in that he omits justification; however this writer does not agree with that objection because the word reconciliation necessarily must include the idea of justification. No theologian with whom this writer is familiar would allow that reconciliation between God and humans could be possible without including the concept of justification. Thus, reconciliation is a more expansive word because it is comprised of all the necessary components, including justification, that bring about reconciliation.

This writer suspects that most preachers today have given little thought to the role of the conscience in the Wesleyan *ordo salutis*, yet Outler is decidedly correct in his wording as he refers to the way of salvation as *an organic continuum*, an interesting phraseology, indeed. The word *organic* has several meanings,⁴⁵⁴ two of which are applicable here. First, organic means alive, or living, and the *ordo salutis* is truly the living way through Christ.

Second, organic means to form an integral part of a whole, in other words, it is through, or by means of, the conscience that one actually begins the process of salvation through Christ; the conscience, therefore, becomes an integral part of *ordo salutis*. To begin the process of salvation through any of the other parts of this continuum is to subvert the entire process, because, as John Wesley says, "till we are sensible of our disease it admits of no cure."⁴⁵⁵

Outler is correct to use the word *continuum* as a descriptor of his *ordo salutis*, because the usage of this word indicates that there is no fine line of separation between successive stages. God does just as he likes as he moves a sinner through

⁴⁵³ Albert Outler, BCE 1:80. Bold print mine.

⁴⁵⁴ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "organic," <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/organic>, accessed 2/23/2018.

⁴⁵⁵ BCE, 1:347, Sermon 14.

these various stages; in other words, God customizes each seeker's *experience* according to that sinner's needs.

Charles Wesley, and his brother agrees with him, is clear as to the starting point of salvation in his sermon 3, entitled, "*Awake, Thou That Sleepest*," dated April 4, 1742. Viewing sin as a disease, he describes the state of the unsaved sinner:

3. Full of all diseases as he is, he fancies himself in perfect health. Fast bound in misery and iron, he dreams that he is happy and at liberty. He says, 'Peace, peace,' while the devil as 'a strong man armed' is in full possession of his soul. He sleeps on still, and takes his rest, though hell is moved from beneath to meet him; though the pit, from whence there is no return, hath opened its mouth to swallow him up. A fire is kindled around him, yet he knoweth it not; yea, it burns him, yet he lays it not to heart.

4. By one who sleeps we are therefore to understand (and would to God we might all understand it!) a sinner satisfied in his sins, contented to remain in his fallen state, to live and die without the image of God; one who is ignorant both of his disease and of the only remedy for it; one who never was warned, or never regarded the warning voice of God 'to flee from the wrath to come'; one that never yet saw he was in danger of hell-fire, or cried out in the earnestness of his soul, 'What must I do to be saved?'⁴⁵⁶

It is the task of the evangelist to *prick the conscience* of his auditors in order to motivate the lost sinner to ask the all-important question: "What must I do to be saved?" It is now, at this point, when one's conscience is finally pricked, when one first becomes fully aware of one's spiritual disease, and not before, that one becomes ready to listen to the answer to one's problem of sin. But, emotion does not do its work in a vacuum, because reason also is needed in order for one to make sense of what he or she is hearing in the evangelist's message. While the lever that moves the sinner to desire the salvation offered by Christ is the emotive, anointed, preaching of the evangelist, or fire in the pulpit that touches and resonates with the sinner's conscience and emotional needs, it is the sinner's reason that makes sense of, and assimilates the evangelist's message. It is now, as Wesley teaches, that a diseased soul will not only want the cure, but also welcome encouragement to remain with, and grow in, Christ, as the only hope from the destruction which will otherwise surely come.

In his sermon entitled, *The Repentance of Believers*, John Wesley mentions that,

II.1. In this sense we are to *repent* after we are justified. And till we do so we can go no farther. For till we are sensible of our disease it admits of no cure. But supposing we do thus repent, then are we called to 'believe the gospel'.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁶ Op. cit., BCE, 1:143-144. Underlining mine.

⁴⁵⁷ Op. cit., BCE, 1:347, Sermon 14.

Here, John is clarifying the *ordo salutis* by adding that repentance is called for not only before justification (Outler's reconciliation step), but also after receiving pardon as God progressively reveals more and more of our sin as we grow in grace and holiness. This deeper aspect of sin in us is revealed to us *through our conscience*, but how does this come about?

Speaking as an evangelist, Wesley says that conscience is the first step in the *ordo salutis* because preaching the gospel to the unsaved is a waste of time... unless the preacher first *pricks their consciences*, that is, emotively tells them why they need the cure which Christ freely offers to them. Outler realizes this fact when he places the conscience as the first step in the *ordo salutis*; however, this writer has come to realize that Wesley's *ordo salutis* should not only begin, but also end, with conscience - a most unique and original claim - because, for the remainder of the born-again, spirit-filled believer's life it will be through one's conscience that God continues to communicate peace or chastisement, and by which God will provide a compass, a compass given to all of his children, in order to guide them safely *home*. It is through one's conscience that one begins the pilgrim's journey, and it is through one's conscience that one's journey is completed.

In other words, by adding conscience also as the final step of the *ordo salutis*, one's conscience is emphasized as a continuing, major instrument whereby the pilgrim is continually guided by God, himself. God speaks to Christians primarily through their conscience as he gives them directions through feelings of chastisement, or encouragement and the peace of God, feelings that are experienced and expressed through one's emotions that are channeled through one's conscience.

As was presented earlier in chapter two, God writes his law on every person's conscience, and he intends that it remain there for the entirety of each life as a guide for moral living and as a direction finder pointing to *home*. This claim radically raises the importance of the conscience in Wesley's theology, a fact that seems to be seldom recognized.

This writer has come to understand that God gives each *pilgrim* three things that one needs, and must have, in order to reach one's proper home: a map, a compass, and a guide. The Bible is the map *showing* the way home; the conscience is the moral compass *pointing* to the way home; and the Holy Spirit, himself, is the guide who *leads* one home.

The Conscience

Hallesby (1879-1961), has produced the best book concerning the conscience that this writer has found to date.⁴⁵⁸ In providing the etymology of the word conscience, he says that this word is derived from the Latin verb meaning “to *know with*” and that there is a parallel root in several languages including Greek, Latin, Swedish, and his native Norwegian. But, he points out, conscience does not only mean to know with, but also “a knowing together with something or some one (sic).” “Among all races,” he says, “it is a characteristic of man that he in his conscience knows together with a will that is over and above his own;” this “supermundane” will is, of course, “the will of God.” From this basis of understanding, Hallesby goes on to define the word “conscience.”⁴⁵⁹

We can, therefore, define conscience as that knowledge or consciousness by which man knows that he is conforming to moral law or the will of God.

Let us note that it is a knowing *with*. It is not merely a knowing of ourselves and a knowing of the will of God. It is a knowing with in the sense that we know that *we* are one *with the will of God*. We become conscious of what our relationship is to the will of God, whether we are doing His will or are not doing it. Our conscience tells us, therefore, not only what we *are* but also what we *ought to be*.

Conscience is consciousness of a holy, superhuman law, which addresses itself to man's conscious will, not to enforce obedience to it, but that man might freely and without compulsion follow that law which he through conscience recognizes as the law which he ought to follow.⁴⁶⁰

He mentions an additional, significant fact: it is our conscience that separates us from all the other animals, for they are without a conscience.⁴⁶¹ This touches, says Hallesby, on the question of what “makes man a man” and what differentiates and elevates him above the animals.⁴⁶² He continues,

It is through conscience that man acquires consciousness of his humanity, differentiating him from the brute. It is through conscience that man learns that he is not under necessity, as animals are, to follow the natural law [instinct], but is ordained to live according to *spiritual* law.⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁸ Ole Kristian Hallesby (1879-1961), 1933, *Conscience*. Robert M. Solomon, an ardent admirer of Hallesby, has provided a more modern version, with many references to Hallesby, entitled, 2010, “The Conscience, Rediscovering the Inner Compass,” and which is also most valuable in understanding the conscience in today’s milieu.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 12-13.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 14.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁶² Ibid.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., 14. Brackets mine, italics Hallesby’s.

Hallesby says that the addition of the conscience to human nature can be likened to a doubling of our personality in that the conscience takes the stance of being exterior to the self so that the self can be observed and judged concerning its thoughts and actions towards God. Then, conscience renders a verdict upon the self, but, incredibly, its judgment is always and “entirely objective and unbiased.” “At the judgment bar of conscience it is the accused person himself who passes judgment!” The conscience renders judgment on one’s past, present, or future “actions, words, thoughts, feelings,” and even “what we ourselves are compare[d] with the will of God.”⁴⁶⁴

Conscience speaks to us before a contemplated action. It also speaks to us as we are in the act of doing a particular contemplated action, but in this case conscience seems speak more softly because we are often so intent upon the doing, or because our emotions are surging. It is after an act or thought is completed that the conscience’s voice is the loudest as it renders judgment upon what we have done or thought, whether said action was good or bad.⁴⁶⁵

Hallesby sees one’s conscience acting upon three levels: first, on “bodily existence,” that includes thirst or hunger; second, on “psychological” existence, based upon psychological needs or disappointments; third, spiritually, concerning “moral values.” It is the third category that differentiates humanity from the animal kingdom for on this level one is dealing with absolutes; “it is no longer a question of what is useful to me, but of what is *right*.” This question only has meaning when asked with respect to God, and thus, one is dealing in absolutes: “moral values are absolute in their nature.”⁴⁶⁶

Charles Wesley poetically identifies the spiritual nature of the conscience as he writes:

1. Conscience, thou voice of God in man,
Accused by thee, we strive in vain
Thy clamours to suppress:
A thousand witnesses thou art;
And God is greater than our heart,
And all its evils sees.
2. Thy voice outspeaks, and strikes us dumb,
When greater sinners we presume
With rigour to condemn,

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 19. Italics are Hallesby’s.

It makes us hide our guilty head,
Who vilest profligates upbraid,
And judge ourselves in them.⁴⁶⁷

Charles is commenting on the book of John 8:9, concerning the woman caught in the act of adultery,⁴⁶⁸ but he is speaking to us concerning the operation of one's conscience. In this poem, Charles writes of the impartiality of the conscience (2:1), and clearly states that one's conscience is the "voice of God in man" (1:1), thus agreeing with Hallesby's claim, above, that conscience is "a knowing together with something or some one (sic)." Concerning the voice of conscience, Charles writes that its "voice outspeaks" and silences us when we would condemn others, by condemning ourselves and judging us as guilty; we are silenced by our own *feelings* of guilt (v. 2).

The output, the judgment, the verdict of the conscience is expressed through one's emotional system: one feels good or bad, peaceful or restless as the conscience renders its decision concerning a past, present, or future action, word, or thought. The judgment is absolute and final in that no reasons are given and no bargaining can take place; judgment is for the individual only, and is irrevocable and not appealable. One's conscience becomes the seat of judgment and possesses judicial authority, but does not have legislative authority, in other words, the conscience only pronounces whether the act is bad or good, it does not tell us what to do about our fault.⁴⁶⁹

Emotions such as feeling guilty or innocent, anxiety, panic, fear, joy and peace, are typical outputs of the conscience; the joy of the Lord, and the peace of God are felt through the conscience.

Bishop Solomon asks a question pertinent to this discussion: "How does one become aware of one's sins?"⁴⁷⁰ Solomon's answer, of course, is through one's conscience, but what if one does not realize that he or she has sinned? Here is where the evangelist enters the picture by telling sinners what God has to say about their actions; likewise, God may speak to one, through one's conscience, as one reads the Bible.⁴⁷¹ Even John Wesley knew (in 1744) that these words from the evangelist or

⁴⁶⁷ Op. Cit., cited in George Osborn (1808-1891), 1868, *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley Not Before Published*, 11:416-417.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., Osborn indicates this information in a heading to this poem.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 30-31.

⁴⁷⁰ Robert M. Solomon, 2010, *The Conscience, Rediscovering the Inner Compass*, 29.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

the Bible would become effective only if the conscience were actually pricked. That is, activated, or awakened.⁴⁷²

Solomon, with much help from Hallesby, comes to some preliminary conclusions through his study of the conscience.

1. The conscience operates within a man [person] and is designed to warn him against disobeying God.
2. But the sinful nature of man can damage the proper functioning of conscience.
3. The proper functioning of the conscience can be further affected by ignorance and circumstances.
4. The conscience can be seriously damaged by repeated disobedience.
5. It can become increasingly non-functional with repeated disobedience.
6. The lack of use of the conscience and its misuse will result in great danger to both the person and those around him.⁴⁷³

The conclusions reached by Solomon lend understanding as to how so many people have *broken* their consciences, in addition to the serious damage already caused by the Fall, as John Wesley would say. These considerations should give pause to the evangelist and the preacher as they prepare to deliver their message, because pricking the consciences of the people is the only way to reach them; preachers must consider the fact that they are often preaching to people with *broken consciences*. John Wesley recognizes and solves this problem by becoming an emotive, plain-speaking preacher, as evidenced by his acknowledged role as a folk theologian, by committing to a “plain style” of preaching, as opposed to “French oratory.”⁴⁷⁴

I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings, and as far as possible from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scriptures. I labour to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life; and in particular those kinds of technical terms that so frequently occur in bodies of divinity, those modes of speaking which men of reading are intimately acquainted with, but which to common people are an unknown tongue. Yet I am not assured that I do not sometimes slide into them unawares: it is so extremely natural to imagine that a word which is familiar to ourselves is so to all the world.⁴⁷⁵

Wesley also solved this problem through his strong emphasis on the two grand doctrines of Methodism: Justification and Sanctification:

⁴⁷² John Wesley, *Sermon 4, Scriptural Christianity*, BCE 1:161.

⁴⁷³ Robert M. Solomon, *Ibid.*, 2010, *The Conscience, Rediscovering the Inner Compass*, 30.

⁴⁷⁴ Albert Outler, Introduction, BCE 1:47

⁴⁷⁵ *Preface to Wesley's Sermons*, BCE, 1:104.

in a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed, all the inner man is full of sin, and here is no part that is good, *no not one*. How needful now is a new birth to a man in this case? Can he enter into heaven that savours all of earth? Will those precious gates of gold and pearls open to a sinner? NO! he must be new moulded and sanctified.⁴⁷⁶

Better he had never been born, than not to be *new born*. Except by a new birth, man is *without* Christ; for if *any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*: and if he be not in *Christ*, what hopes of that man? It is only *Christ* that is the *Way* to heaven; besides Him there is no *Way*, no *Truth*, no *Life*.⁴⁷⁷

Through the above citation from Ambrose, John Wesley describes humanity's universal condition resulting from, in Wesley's words, the Fall; John also describes the condition of those who have had an Aldersgate experience, and who continue to grow in Christ. John, in eighteenth-century language, here provides an answer to the question raised by Bondi that was discussed in chapter one. The question she poses is one of the most important questions anyone could ever ask:

What does an "Aldersgate spirituality" do to us? What happens when we expect that, from the day we become Christian, we ought to be full of simple [pure] love for God and neighbor?⁴⁷⁸

“What does an Aldersgate spirituality do to us?”

The answer to this question is that something, indeed, is done, in Bondi's words, “to us,” for it is by means of an Aldersgate experience that one's personality is *integrated*. A result of humanity's Fall and ensuing sin, as Wesley would say, one's personality became *dis-integrated*, where, “in a word, the understanding is darkened, the will enthralled, the affections disordered, the memory defiled, the conscience benumbed, [and] all the inner man is full of sin.” Anyone who enters this world through a birthing process enters it with a *dis-integrated personality*. Wesley teaches that it is by means of an Aldersgate experience that, for the Christian, the dis-integrated soul is re-integrated and all of the disorders of the soul that Wesley mentions are healed and set right.

An obscure Methodist holiness preacher, by the name of Day, uniquely describes the effects that the Christian integration of a human personality produces:

⁴⁷⁶ John Wesley, 1752, ‘The Life of Mr. Isaac Ambrose,’ in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of The Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity, Which have been publish'd in the English Tongue*, Vol. 13, *Extracts from the Works of Isaac Ambrose, Sometime Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire, To Which is Prefix'd Some Account of His Life*, 52-53. Italics and capitals are Wesley's.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 59. Italics are Wesley's, underlining is mine.

⁴⁷⁸ Roberta C. Bondi, *Aldersgate and Patterns of Methodist Spirituality*, in Randy Maddox, ed., “Aldersgate Reconsidered,” 22. Only underlining is mine.

The importance of such integration can scarcely be exaggerated. It makes an end of the friction which consumes valuable energy, of the conflict which pulls the [sinner] hither and yon, of the clamor which distracts attention, of the division which can bring only a fraction of the self to bear upon any task. It puts the libido behind every task, makes possible a concentration of energy and attention at the point where they are needed, so that one can say, "This one thing I do." The result is not merely inner peace, but vastly increased effectiveness in action. One can think with all his mind, love with all his heart, act with all his will. Whatever he does, *he* does, not a fragment of him while other fragments oppose or are inert, but he himself, all of him. Because *he* thinks, and it is not merely a thinking which is taking place, his thought is more vigorous, direct, penetrating, inclusive. Because *he* loves, and that loving is not merely a stirring of the affection, his love is more robust, more ample, more sturdy. Because *he* wills, and it is not a mere conation that is occurring, his will has more iron in it, is more inflexible, less easily turned aside. He is more effective as an individual and as a member of society.

The failure to recognize the necessity for such integration is one of the weaknesses of many reformers.⁴⁷⁹

With the above paragraph providing context, compare John Wesley's life before his Aldersgate experience, or Charles's for that matter, with the life he lived after his Aldersgate experience. Before he had this unique experience with God, John felt himself to have been a total failure, and so he was, as he admitted both after his trip to America and as one who had long struggled to be, in his words, a genuine Christian. After his Aldersgate experience, where God is the agency causing his change, the cumulative effect of his integrated personality upon his Christian activity not only changed England for the better,⁴⁸⁰ it also produced a similar effect that was, and still is, felt around the world.⁴⁸¹ This evidence is strong, indeed!

The primary result of a Christian whose personality is now truly integrated is that she, or he, finally becomes *capable* of *whole-heartedly* working for the cause of Christ because one is now whole-heartedly committed to Christ, that is, one now has a *simple* faith, that is, in Wesley's words, a faith unmixed with, for instance, unbelief, personal ambition, greed, or lust. Additionally, an integrated personality also includes strengthening one's *capacity to love* God, and others, wholeheartedly, because the integration of the personality also includes, by divine action, that one's emotions are also set right.

Outler, in his introductory comments to Sermon 12, *The Witness of Our Own Spirit*, has this to say about Wesley:

⁴⁷⁹ Albert Edward Day (1884-1973), 1938, *God in Us: We in God*, 158-159.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf., John Wesley Bready (1887-1953), 1938, *England: Before and After Wesley*. Although Bready presents a somewhat hagiographical account, the information he provides is well worthwhile reading.

⁴⁸¹ Cf., John Ernest Rattenbury (1870-1963), 1929, *Wesley's Legacy to the World; Six Studies in the Permanent Values of the Evangelical Revival*, 150 ff.

[In this sermon,] Wesley undertakes an analysis of the *subjective* side of this [Aldersgate] *experience* of grace. His distinctive emphasis, however, is his careful correlation of assurance with a good conscience. What we have, then, is a brief essay on conscience, its marks and norms—and the resultant joy of Christian living 'in simplicity and godly sincerity . . .'. Wesley recognizes the logical distinctions between adoption, justification, and regeneration but is even more concerned to show their psychological integration in the Christian experience of assurance [i.e., the witness of one's spirit made through one's conscience] and how the process of sanctification, begun with regeneration, is really aimed at 'the recovery of the image of God' (an equivalent phrase for holiness).⁴⁸²

Here, Outler, with a succinctness that may require some unpacking, combines Wesley's ideas about the Christian integration of the personality (i.e., psychological integration) with respect to the results: the whole process of sanctification, which includes the integration of the personality, is truly "aimed at 'the recovery of the image of God' (an equivalent phrase for holiness)." When Outler uses the phrase, "and the resultant joy of Christian living 'in simplicity and godly sincerity,'" the reader will now understand that the word *simplicity* is a clear reference to living a life that is unmixed with unbelief, as was discussed in chapter one.

Outler also emphasizes the role of one's conscience in receiving the providence of God's assurance that one is genuinely pleasing to God, for joy and peace, and so forth, are experienced through one's emotional faculties whereby one's conscience becomes the channel through which such assurance is experienced.

It must be emphasized that any Aldersgate experience... is an experience, but not just any experience, because, as Wesley teaches, it is an experience with God. The reader will recall that "the most alive center of ourselves" is our feelings [and emotions];⁴⁸³ and, therefore any experience, including an Aldersgate experience, is sensed, or felt, through one's emotional faculties. An experience, any experience, only becomes real to that one through one's emotional input. First, emotion senses the experience; then, reason comes into play by sorting out all of this sensory (i.e., emotional) input, bringing order to, and making sense of, this experience. Reason without emotion produces legalism; emotion without reason produces fanaticism, or, in Wesley's eighteenth-century language, enthusiasm; therefore, both emotion and reason are necessary, and work together *in harmony* as an emotional/cognitive continuum, but only in harmony in one who has experienced an integration of her or his personality.

⁴⁸² Op. Cit., BCE, 1:299. Only underlining is mine.

⁴⁸³ See this thesis, 8: Karen Horney, 1950, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, 157. Brackets are mine.

But a closer look at this event called sanctification, an event that occurs within the overall process of sanctification, is warranted. A genuine *Aldersgate experience* produces such drastic changes in a person that the biblical writers, and the Wesley brothers, themselves, can only describe it as a *new birth*; Wesley teaches that one's original self is not merely patched up, but it is as though that person died and was resurrected as an entirely new person whose personality is now integrated. Indeed, as a response to his description of the dis-integrated personality that exists within every person born into this world, Wesley says, "How needful now is a *new birth* to a [person] in this case?"⁴⁸⁴ Wesley answers his own question with these words: *it is the one thing* needful, addressed to those who have not yet awakened to their true needs, in a sermon entitled, "Awake, Thou That Sleepest!"⁴⁸⁵

It must be emphasized here that Wesley also teaches that after the Christian's Aldersgate experience, one needs to continue to grow in holiness for the rest of one's life. An Aldersgate experience is not an end-point for growth in holiness, but rather a new beginning, whereby that person's faculties and abilities are brought into order and harmony, and one finally ceases to be, in the Apostle James' words, a double-minded person; the power of the carnal mind is, at the very least, broken, and one is now also equipped with the mind of Christ; when one's personality has been integrated, one now begins to think like Christ. It is precisely now, at this point in the order of Wesley's salvation, that the Christian *can* begin living, in Bondi's words, a *simple* Christian life, which is none other than a life lived in Christ, a life that is not mixed with unbelief, and is not controlled by the carnal mind. The word *can*, in the previous sentence is important, for living a simple Christian life is never easy.

Below, Wesley recognizes that after one's Aldersgate experience, the power of one's carnal mind is often only broken rather than put to death, and can, for a time, coexist with the mind of Christ. Wesley, through a dialectic argument, concisely, but clearly, expresses his thoughts on this subject with these words:

⁴⁸⁴ See 153-154, this thesis: John Wesley, 1752, 'The Life of Mr. Isaac Ambrose,' in *A Christian Library: Consisting of Extracts from and Abridgments of The Choicest Pieces of Practical Divinity, Which have been publish'd in the English Tongue*, Vol. 13, *Extracts from the Works of Isaac Ambrose, Sometime Minister of Garstang, in Lancashire, To Which is Prefix'd Some Account of His Life*, 52-53. Italics and capitals are Wesley's.

⁴⁸⁵ Sermon 3, BCE 1:142-158. Only underlining is mine.

[**One says:**] 'But a man cannot be clean, sanctified, holy, and at the same time unclean, unsanctified, unholy.'

[**Wesley says:**] Indeed he may. So the Corinthians were. 'Ye are washed,' says the Apostle, 'ye are sanctified'; namely cleansed from 'fornication, idolatry, drunkenness', and all other outward sin. And yet at the same time, in another sense of the word, they were *unsanctified*: they were not *washed*, not inwardly *cleansed* from envy, evil surmising, partiality.

[**One says:**] 'But sure they had not a new heart and an old heart together.'

[**Wesley says:**] 'It is most sure they had; for at that very time their hearts were *truly*, yet not *entirely*, renewed. Their carnal mind was nailed to the cross; yet it was not wholly destroyed.

[**One says:**] 'But could they be *unholy* while they were "temples of the Holy Ghost"?'

[**Wesley says:**] Yes, that they were 'temples of the Holy Ghost' is certain. And it is equally certain they were, in some degree, *carnal*, that is, *unholy*. 'However, there is one Scripture more which will put the matter out of question: "If any man be (a believer) in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

[**One says:**] Now certainly a man cannot be a *new creature* and an *old creature* at once.'

[**Wesley says:**] Yes, he may: he may be *partly renewed*, which was the very case with those at Corinth. They were doubtless 'renewed in the spirit of their mind', or they could not have been so much as 'babes in Christ'. Yet they had not the whole mind which was in Christ, for they *envied* one another.⁴⁸⁶

[**One says:**] 'But Christians are "reconciled to God". Now this could not be if any of the "carnal mind" remained; for this "is enmity against God". Consequently no reconciliation can be effected but by its total destruction.'

[**Wesley says:**] We 'are reconciled to God through the blood of the cross'. And in that moment, the lust of the flesh, the corruption of nature which is 'enmity with God', is put under our feet. The flesh [the carnal mind] has 'no more dominion over us'. But it still *exists*; and it is still in its nature enmity with God, lusting against his Spirit.⁴⁸⁷

Here, Wesley teaches that if one's carnal mind continues to exist after an Aldersgate experience, at the least its power over its owner is broken. In other words, the Christian is now empowered to say, "No!" to the carnal mind, and to declare, "I have been sanctified, and I don't have to do that anymore!," and, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, even lead a holy life!" Wesley emphatically teaches that these statements are true solely because God tells us they are true, irrespective of our feelings.

Because this point concerning sin remaining in a Christian is so vital to the Christian life, Wesley provides additional clarity:

6. It is true that when the Germans were pressed upon this head they soon allowed (many of them at least) that sin did still remain *in the flesh*, but not *in the heart* of a believer. And

⁴⁸⁶ John Wesley, Sermon 13, *On Sin in Believers*, BCE 1:326. Italics are Wesley's; underlining mine.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid., BCE 1:329.

after a time, when the absurdity of this was shown, they fairly gave up the point; allowing that sin did still *remain*, though not *reign*, in him that is born of God.⁴⁸⁸

[E]very babe in Christ is holy, and yet not altogether so. He is saved from sin; yet not entirely: it *remains*, though it does not *reign*. If you think it does not *remain* (in *babes* at least, whatever be the case with *young men*, or *fathers*) you certainly have not considered the height and depth and length and breadth of the law of God (even the law of love laid down by St. Paul in the thirteenth of Corinthians); and that 'every *ἀνομία*' [act of iniquity], disconformity to, or deviation from this law, 'is sin.' Now, is there no disconformity to this in the heart or life of a believer? What may be in an adult Christian is another question. But what a stranger must he be to human nature who can possibly imagine that this is the case with every babe in Christ!⁴⁸⁹

Thus, Wesley teaches that, at least for babes in Christ, the carnal mind may, after an Aldersgate experience, still exist in the Christian, but with this caveat: its power to reign is now broken. However, to the extent that the carnal mind remains in the believer, to that same extent it will continue to plague its owner. It must always be kept in mind that the carnal mind hates God, and that it will not, even under force, ever submit to the law of God; therefore, the carnal mind is only a remnant of evil left in the sanctified Christian, but a remnant that can still be deadly to the Christian life. If one still retains a remnant of the carnal mind, then it is vital that it be that person's highest priority to earnestly and fervently pray that God will, indeed, entirely kill it; for only God can accomplish this action. Therefore, the process of sanctification continues on after an Aldersgate experience, for eventually these babes in Christ should mature into young men or women in Christ, and finally into fathers and mothers in Christ, and even then the process of sanctification still continues on.

This change brought about through an Aldersgate experience does not easily happen, as can readily be seen through the tremendous and lengthy struggles of each of the Wesley brothers that led up to that event, and which struggles are particularly outlined in Charles's Psalm 107. These struggles to abandon all self-righteousness, all trust in anything or anyone except God, struggles that are needed in order to bring about the death of, or at least the loss of the power of, the carnal mind, and the re-integration of the human personality, are so difficult to accomplish that they can occur only if God performs a miracle, and the key ingredient God uses in accomplishing this miracle is love – love that can be experienced and felt by the

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., BCE 1:319. Italics are Wesley's.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., BCE 1:327.

human recipient; the byproducts of this divine love include joy unspeakable, lasting peace of mind, and enduring hope, emotions whose role is to protect and stimulate the continuous growth of a Christian.

A Broader Perspective of Emotion

At its broadest level, the human faculty of emotion can be divided into two general categories, namely, those of being either a beneficial, or else, a harmful, emotion; a division that is not necessarily sharply defined, nor necessarily easy to perceive or understand. For instance, hatred... of sin, is certainly a beneficial emotion, whereas, hatred of one's neighbor is surely harmful, both to that neighbor and to oneself. If, due to sin, one experiences, say, depression, those emotions associated with said depression, may, under the right circumstances, be beneficial; otherwise, they are usually harmful; so, the context in which an emotion is experienced is important when considering the role of that emotion.

Wesley's overarching concern in a ministry spanning more than fifty years, is about *the one thing needful*, and that one thing is to win the struggle leading to an Aldersgate experience; to win the struggle is to have that experience. Please recall the lament of evangelist Day, who said, above, that one of the greatest weaknesses of today's evangelistic preachers can be seen in *their failure to comprehend* the one thing needful, which is the absolute necessity for the integration of one's personality, or, in other words, the one thing needful is an Aldersgate experience, an experience that includes the integration of one's personality.⁴⁹⁰

While Day's lament concerning the evangelist's weakness of failing to properly present the people's need for an Aldersgate experience is obviously true, perhaps one reason why it is a true statement is because many evangelists lack the language with which to express this necessity. This lack of clear language has caused this writer to experience many years of anguish and struggle as he strove to serve God wholeheartedly, and has thus motivated him to attempt to contribute to the remedy for this situation. Perhaps, an analogy can help to clarify this vastly important human need.

All people continually need God to the same degree that their bodies continually need oxygen. If a person becomes unable to breathe, anxiety, a cognitive emotion whose role is to initiate some kind of action, will immediately be produced. As anxiety increases, within

⁴⁹⁰ See this thesis, 154-155: Albert Edward Day (1884-1973), 1938, *God in Us: We in God*, 158-159. This quotation of Day is a paraphrase of his original words.

seconds everything in that person's life will quickly fade into total irrelevance except for the desire for air; this person now thinks about the obvious: I must continually have air, or else I will quickly die.

Additionally, oxygen is carried to each and every cell in a person's body; any cell that is deprived of oxygen, even for only a few minutes, will die. Likewise, God must inhabit each and every part and faculty of the human personality, lest spiritual death occur in the deprived part.

Therefore, when God integrates any person's personality, that is, when God takes one through one's own customized Aldersgate experience, each and every component of that person's personality is brought under God's guidance and control, which results in a unified person who can wholeheartedly serve God, and wholeheartedly pursue holy living.

Now, and only now, can a Wesley arise with the ability to influence the world for righteousness sake even down through many nations and generations.⁴⁹¹

A characteristic of any dis-integrated person is that God does not fully inhabit that one's human personality, often not even partially; it is often normal for one seeking Christ to at first only partially surrender to God, and herein lies the crux of the intense struggle that always occurs before an Aldersgate experience. As Wesley teaches, in order for a person to live a sanctified, holy life, every faculty that one possesses, every thought that one thinks, every emotion that one experiences, must be filled with God; *herein is the essence and meaning of an Aldersgate experience.*

While the carnal mind lives, even a remnant of the carnal mind, it is impossible for God to totally fill that person. Therefore, the terrific struggle depicted in Charles's noble Psalm 107 is one that pits *the mind-of-Christ-in-the-believer* against *the-carnal-mind-in-the-believer-that-will-not-ever-surrender* to God. All of the roles of emotion in this internal struggle are intended, by God, to bring the recalcitrant soul to him for inner healing, and to remain with him; beneficial emotions are strengthened and become reinforced, while harmful emotions are retarded and eventually purged as the process of sanctification progresses throughout one's lifetime..

Re-integration of the human personality includes the reality of God actually killing the carnal mind, but only with that person's permission... and then, and only then, can God inhabits one's entire personality: that is, now, finally, is *Christ in you* [all], *the hope of glory*;⁴⁹² a verse upon which Wesley makes the following

⁴⁹¹ James Boetcher, written for this thesis on June 15, 2019.

⁴⁹² Colossians 1:27. "you" is a plural pronoun in the KJV, and in Wesley's *Notes*. Italics are mine.

comment: “V. 27. *Christ dwelling and reigning in you, the hope of glory* – The Ground of your Hope.”⁴⁹³

The work of the evangelist truly is of paramount importance, says Wesley, for it is the task of an evangelist to prick the consciences of those who are unaware of their plight, and, after properly awakening them, then to tell them the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth concerning the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, concerning what he has done for them, and teaching them both the full doctrine of justification and that of sanctification.

The Wesley Brothers’ Depressions

Depression becomes an important topic when considering the role of emotion in Wesley’s soteriology because this malady can, according to John Wesley, be used as a tool in God’s hands, a tool whose purpose is to perfect holiness in his people who live in any century.

A Discussion about Depression

Wesley makes this statement concerning the role of depression, or in his words, heaviness:

From the Apostle's manner of speaking we may gather, thirdly, that even heaviness is not *always* needful. 'Now, for a season, if need be'; so it is not needful for *all persons*; nor for any person at *all times*. God is able, he has both power and wisdom, to work when he pleases the same work of grace, in any soul, by other means. And in some instances he does so: he causes those whom it pleaseth him to go on from strength to strength, even till they 'perfect holiness in his fear', with scarce any heaviness at all; as having an absolute power over the heart of man, and moving all the springs of it at his pleasure. But these cases are rare: God generally sees good to try 'acceptable men in the furnace of affliction'; so that manifold temptations and heaviness, more or less, are usually the portion of his dearest children.⁴⁹⁴

Wesley is saying that depression can be used by God, as a furnace of affliction, so to speak, in order to “perfect holiness in his fear.” While depression does not necessarily affect all of God’s people, Wesley says that it is a normal way that many Christians can be refined, or purified, by God.

In the process of translating Wesley’s words and descriptions of what today would be called *depression*, one must remember that, regardless of the century from which one speaks, the real question revolves around the choice of words that are

⁴⁹³ John Wesley, 1757, 2nd ed., *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, Col. 1:27, 544. Italics are Wesley’s.

⁴⁹⁴ John Wesley, Sermon 47, *Heaviness through Manifold Temptations*, BCE 2:234-235. Only underlining is mine.

used to express these concepts; the actual experience of depression remains approximately the same, regardless of the century in which it occurs, and this fact provide a link that makes it possible for one to speak of Wesley's own depression by using today's terminology. People, today, can and do, experience the same type of depression as did Wesley, but no one now would use eighteenth-century language to describe it.

Depression is a mood disorder; in Wesley's eighteenth-century language, he calls it *heaviness* or sometimes *darkness*; Outler expresses Wesley's *heaviness* as *religious depression*, a term that likely comes exceedingly close to an actual cause of Wesley's depression, as will soon be established.⁴⁹⁵ In sermon 47, Wesley opens the meaning of the pejorative word *darkness*:

And, first, how wide is the difference between *darkness* of soul and *heaviness*! Which nevertheless are so generally confounded with each other, even by experienced Christians! Darkness, or the wilderness state, implies a total loss of joy in the Holy Ghost; heaviness does not; in the midst of this we may 'rejoice with joy unspeakable'. They that are in darkness have lost the peace of God; they that are in heaviness have not. So far from it that at the very time 'peace' as well as 'grace' may 'be multiplied unto' them. In the former the love of God is waxed cold, if it be not utterly extinguished; in the latter it retains its full force, or rather increases daily. In these faith itself, if not totally lost, is however grievously decayed. Their evidence and conviction of things not seen, particularly of the pardoning love of God, is not so clear or strong as in time past; and their trust in him is proportionably weakened. Those, though they see him not, yet have a clear, unshaken confidence in God, and an abiding evidence of that love whereby all their sins are blotted out. So that as long as we can distinguish faith from unbelief, hope from despair, peace from war, the love of God from the love of the world, we may infallibly distinguish *heaviness* from *darkness*.

We may learn from hence, secondly, that there may be need of *heaviness*, but there can be no need of *darkness*.⁴⁹⁶

Outler condenses Wesley's lengthy explanation by simply saying that "darkness [is] sinful despair,"⁴⁹⁷ but this longer citation provides important context that is needed in order to better understand this eighteenth-century word.

In this same sermon, below, Wesley provides a detailed definition or description of the word *heaviness*, particularly with reference to Christians, and also to Christians who are filled with the Spirit of God; it is this word that is primarily considered in this thesis.

II.1. Hence we may easily learn what kind of heaviness they were in—the second thing which I shall endeavour to show. The word in the original is λυπηθεντες, 'made sorry',

⁴⁹⁵ Albert Outler, BCE 2:203, in *An Introductory Comment* to Sermons 46 & 47.

⁴⁹⁶ John Wesley, Ser. 47: *Heaviness through Manifold Temptations*, BCE 2: 233-234.

⁴⁹⁷ Albert Outler, *Introductory Comment* to sermons 46 & 47, BCE 2:203

'grieved', from *λυπη*, 'grief' or 'sorrow'. This is the constant, literal meaning of the word: and this being observed, there is no ambiguity in the expression, nor any difficulty in understanding it. The persons spoken of here were *grieved*: the heaviness they were in was neither more nor less than *sorrow* or *grief*—a passion which every child of man is well acquainted with.

2. It is probable our translators rendered it 'heaviness' to denote two things: first, the degree; and next, the continuance of it. It does indeed seem that it is not a slight or inconsiderable degree of grief which is here spoken of, but such as makes a strong impression upon and sinks deep into the soul. Neither does this appear to be a transient sorrow, such as passes away in an hour; but rather such as having taken fast hold of the heart is not presently shaken off, but continues for some time, as a settled temper, rather than a passion—even in them that have living faith in Christ, and the genuine love of God in their hearts.

3. Even in these this heaviness may sometimes be so deep as to overshadow the whole soul, to give a colour, as it were, to all the affections, such as will appear in the whole behaviour. It may likewise have an influence over the body; particularly in those that are either of a naturally weak constitution, or weakened by some accidental disorder, especially of the nervous kind. In many cases we find 'the corruptible body presses down the soul.' In this the soul rather presses down the body, and weakens it more and more. Nay, I will not say that deep and lasting sorrow of heart may not sometimes weaken a strong constitution, and lay the foundation of such bodily disorders as are not easily removed. And yet all this may consist with a measure of that 'faith which' still 'worketh by love'.⁴⁹⁸

A summary of Wesley' description of heaviness, above, includes the following characteristics:

- Deep grief, sorrow that makes a strong impression upon or overshadows one's soul
- Colors all the affections [emotions] that, in turn, alters one's whole behavior
- Not transient [is long term]; continues as a settled temper [mood], rather than a [short-term] passion
- Can adversely affect one's psychological outlook, that can, in turn, adversely affect one's physiology, whereby these physical ailments become difficult to cure
- Heaviness can coexist with a measure of living faith in Christ

This citation describing *heaviness*, above, written by Wesley in 1760, is amazingly congruent with neuroscience's description of *depression*. In Mondimore's book, 2006, *Depression, the Mood Disease*, this neuroscientist and psychiatrist provides a number of characteristics that describe twenty-first-century depression, and which also may be called *restriction of mood*,⁴⁹⁹ such as:

- preoccupation with failure, feelings of guilt

⁴⁹⁸ Op. Cit., BCE, 2:224-225. All punctuation, italics, are Wesley's.

⁴⁹⁹ Op. Cit., Francis Mark Mondimore, 6-10, 13.

- poor concentration, slowed thinking
- a change in mood lasts often for weeks, months, or even years, pervasive
- unhappy and miserable, unable to feel pleasure
- very irritable and short-tempered, unable to speak well of others
- impatient and restless, unable to relax
- adversely affects sleep and dreams

Just as all religious connotation was stripped from today's meaning of emotion, it has likewise been stripped from today's meaning of the word depression. Yet, there are vestiges of religious connotation that have escaped the censor's pen, because Mondimore has included a list of some of the characteristics of depression, such as "feelings of guilt and inadequacy," and "fearful, overwhelmed feelings," characteristics that may also have a religious connotation, and might be applied to John and Charles Wesley.

Depression and the Wesley Brothers

It is well-known to Wesleyan scholars that both brothers had periodic bouts of depression. What was it that triggered these episodes of depression, or, as either brother would say, heaviness of heart? In answering this question, this writer realizes that there are a number of causes of this mood disease called depression, such as the ingestion of certain plant materials, and artificially created medications; a number of brain diseases that cause the loss or death of brain cells; under-production of any number of chemicals produced by the brain, some of which are called neurotransmitters (chemicals needed for neurons to communicate with each other); these specific causes are included in the general category of "biological and chemical malfunctions of the brain,"⁵⁰⁰ and it is possible that any of these causes, or various combinations of these causes, could have affected the Wesley brothers. However, today it is not feasible to investigate them; what is feasible, is to investigate any possible religious causes of depression that may be buried within the vast Wesleyan corpus to see if a feasible explanation might be found.

Wesley and Johnson, both men of the eighteenth-century, acknowledge the religious component related to depression, and this component is called religious depression, or depression brought about by religious action or inaction, a common malady in the eighteenth century. In Johnson's 1757 edition of his dictionary, he

⁵⁰⁰ Francis Mark Mondimore, 2006, *Depression, The Mood Disease*, 6-10.

includes in his definition of *despond* the following: 2. In theology, “to lose hope of the divine mercy.”

This writer maintains that, periodically, the Wesley brothers, each, but at different times, and for differing reasons, temporarily lost “hope of the divine mercy,” and that this despondency was triggered by slight sins that had activated their finely-tuned consciences. As can be seen in their struggles to have the image of Christ renewed within them prior to their Aldersgate experiences, the emotion of despair played a major role in *forcing* them to abandon their reliance on their own works, and it was despair caused by pricks to their conscience as they considered their own sins that also may have led them into depression.

Thanks to the action of their overly sensitive consciences, they become more fully aware of the weight of their current sins; their consciences were now working exactly as their Creator had intended. Remember, the conscience is a judge only, here rendering the verdict: “Guilty on all counts!” Conscience never tells its owner what to do about its judgment; Luther, who had been dead for nearly two hundred years, gave them that information through the agency of Peter Böhler, and through the Moravians meeting that night in Aldersgate Street. When John read the truth, his conscience judged that Luther was right; when John finally surrendered to God by relinquishing all of his trust in his own righteousness, he felt God’s peace and the fire (presence) of the Holy Spirit through the agency of his conscience.

Sometime between May 14th, and May 19th, 1738, just days before his Aldersgate experience, John pens in his diary a lengthy transcription of a letter, written by his friend, John Gambold,⁵⁰¹ who also is feeling depression. As Gambold describes the depression that he feels, it is certain that John identifies with Gambold’s letter, for he also is feeling the same type of depression, which he expresses in a letter written, perhaps in reply to Gambold, not more than three days before his Aldersgate experience, and which experience would at least temporarily lift his depression on the evening of May 24th; but, depression would come back to haunt him several more times during his lifetime.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰¹ Henry Moore identifies, in parentheses, that the letter writer is “viz. (namely) Mr. Gambold,” 1824, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, London ed., 1:380

⁵⁰² JWJ, BCE 18:240-242. Cf., John Telford (1851-1936), 1931, *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford*, 1:244-245

John feels his load of sin and recognizes that he is dead in trespasses and sins,⁵⁰³ and senses the resulting feelings of guilt, courtesy of his conscience.

O why is it that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as me! Lord, 'let the dead bury their dead!' But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou *wilt* send, and showest mercy by whom thou *wilt* show mercy! Amen! Be it then according to thy will! If thou speak the word, Judas shall cast out devils.⁵⁰⁴

He *feels* condemnation for even every *slight* infraction; he *feels* unholy – which feelings represent the judgment of his conscience; yet he also *feels* a voice – the voice of God, through his conscience... approving... urging him to believe...

John Wesley expresses his strong feelings, and some of his reasoning, in this Journal entry:

I *feel* what you say (though not enough) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy and just and good. I know every thought, every temper of my soul ought to bear God's image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God! I *feel* that 'I am sold under sin'. I know that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations; and having no good thing in me to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers, need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy; I am unholy. God is a consuming fire; I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed. Yet I hear a voice (and is it not the voice of God?) saying, 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved.' 'He that believeth is passed from death unto life.' 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'⁵⁰⁵

His conscience will know when he has "attained this faith!" Yet, he hopes to feel the peace of God within him, and feel the Holy Spirit whisper to his spirit, which whisper will be felt in his heart, that is, in his conscience; the peace and joy, and the love of God felt in his conscience.

O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel 'peace with God', and 'joy in the Holy Ghost'? Does his 'Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God'? Alas, with *mine* he does not. Nor, I fear, with yours. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in anything but *thee*! Draw us after thee! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy in believing, and let nothing separate us from thy love in time or in eternity!⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰³ John uses the term "dead in trespasses and sins" no less than 18 times in his sermons. BCE, vols. 1-4.

⁵⁰⁴ JWJ, 18:241-242. This paragraph is part of the letter he pens to, presumably, Gambold, prior to his Aldersgate experience. The next two quotes contain the remainder of this letter from his journal.

⁵⁰⁵ JWJ, 18:242. Underlining mine.

⁵⁰⁶ John Wesley, *Journals and Diaries*, BCE, 18:241-242. This portion concludes John's letter.

Thus, John understands that it is through one's conscience that God speaks to each Christian, and through which God's peace is given to him or her.

Who cannot identify with John's letter? Saint and seeking sinner alike have either gone through, or are going through, this process, a process that includes despair, and this fact stresses the need for evangelists and preachers who are serious enough about their call to adequately prepare themselves to deliver God's full message on this subject.

Each bout of the Wesleys' depression is triggered by a sensitive and finely tuned conscience, because they think that if they really were Christians, then their consciences would not condemn them. But, they *feel* that their consciences *do* condemn them; ergo, they *are not* Christians. Their prayer was that God would hone their consciences, that is, make their consciences razor-sharp in detecting the slightest deviation from God's law.

One or two examples of the workings of John's very tender conscience should suffice to illustrate this point. The first example occurs just over one week after his Aldersgate experience

June 1, 1738, Yet on Wednesday did I grieve the Spirit of God, not only by not 'watching unto prayer', but likewise by speaking with sharpness instead of tender love, of one that was not sound in the faith. Immediately God hid his face and I was troubled; and in this heaviness I continued till the next morning, June 1, when it pleased God, while I was exhorting another, to give comfort to *my* soul, and (after I had spent some time in prayer) to direct me to those gracious words, 'Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, . . . let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.[. . .] Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised), and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works.'⁵⁰⁷

John's depression, above, is brought about by God hiding his face from him, carried over until the next morning; his sin was "not watching unto prayer," and speaking "with sharpness" to another person.

Friday 20, July, 1759. From Thriplow I walked to Orwell, and thence to Everton, in weakness of body and heaviness of spirit. Mr. B[erridge] was preaching when I came in. Here God again refreshed my soul. I shook from head to foot, while tears of joy ran down my face, and my distress was at an end.

The above citation provides an example of John experiencing depression due to severe bodily strain that was expressed through his severe shaking from head to

⁵⁰⁷ JWJ, BCE 18:253

foot; God's grace in providing Christian fellowship and anointed preaching was sufficient to end his depression and bring him tears of joy.

Privately, the Wesley brothers expected perfection, and this writer submits that the severe depression John felt, for instance, upon his return from Georgia, or in Outler's words his "Georgia fiasco,"⁵⁰⁸ was due to the judgment of his conscience concerning his actions in America: he had failed in his mission to convert the Indians and also discovered that, as he neared the English shore, that he, himself, was in need of conversion. Worst of all, he could not say, "To die is gain!"

Tue. 24 [January, 1738]. We spoke with two ships, outward bound, from whom we had the welcome news of our wanting but 160 leagues of the Land's End. My mind was now full of thought, part of which I writ down as follows:

I went to America to convert the Indians; but Oh! who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of unbelief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near: but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, 'To die is gain!'

I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore!⁵⁰⁹

John's conscience had judged that his fear of death, and his failure in Georgia, constituted sin, and his response to the judgment of his conscience, considering the fact that he had tried so hard, but in his own strength, to please God - was depressing. As a *so-called* Christian, he expected better of himself; he thought that if he were a real Christian, he would not have failed, and besides, he thought he should have already been a real Christian by now.

In his introductory comments to Sermons 46-47, Outler cites from Wesley's Notes, John 16:22, as follows:⁵¹⁰

John 16: 22 for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice,

22. *Ye now therefore have sorrow*—This gives us no manner of authority to assert all believers *must* come into a state of darkness. They never need lose either their peace, or love, or the witness that they are the children of God. They never can lose these, but either through sin, or ignorance, or vehement temptation, or bodily disorder.⁵¹¹

Here Wesley plainly states the reasons for his heaviness, or depression: sin, ignorance, strong temptation, and physical illness. This list provides the most likely

⁵⁰⁸ Albert Outler, BCE 1:38.

⁵⁰⁹ JWJ, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., BCE 18:211

⁵¹⁰ Albert Outler, BCE 2:203.

⁵¹¹ John Wesley, 1757, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, 2nd ed., John 16:22.

causes of his recurrent bouts of depression. The writings of Wesley substantiate this assumption, and these reasons, once Wesley becomes aware of them, would surely trigger his sensitive, some would say, overly sensitive conscience.

Concerning an overly sensitive conscience, Chaucer makes this observation, in his *Canterbury Tales*, concerning the conscience of the Parson, in “The Parson’s Tale:”⁵¹²

A bettre preest I trowe° that nowhere noon° ys°.	°know, none, is
He waited after no pompe and reverence,	525
Ne° maked him a spiced° conscience,	° Nor, excessively scrupulous or sensitive

The Parson was not troubled with a *spiced conscience*, that is, an overly scrupulous or sensitive conscience; this is a statement that implies that there were parsons who *were* so troubled. The *Parson’s Tale* is the only story in which Chaucer depicts a thoroughly godly man, a man without guile, gluttony, or greed. The Wesley brothers were godly, and while their intent was noble, each did have “a spiced conscience,” which means that their consciences *were* abnormally sensitive, for they had fervently prayed for precisely that, and therefore, the slightest transgression which they could perceive often resulted in severe conviction.

In Sermon 12, written in 1746,⁵¹³ which was relatively early in his ministry, John thought, and taught, that

... on the contrary, a Christian has the most exquisite sensibility, such as he would not have conceived before. He never had such a tenderness of conscience as he has had since the love of God has reigned in his heart. And this also is his glory and joy, that God hath heard his daily prayer:

O that my tender soul might fly
 The first abhorred approach of ill:
 Quick as the apple of an eye
 The slightest touch of sin to feel.⁵¹⁴

Charles had similar thoughts regarding his conscience:

Tenderness of conscience is the noblest preservative from sin, and a **scrupulous** fear of offending the best safeguard against it. The fortress of virtue is most effectually secured, when the inlets to vice are most sedulously guarded. Constant recollection impedes attack; and he who never exposes himself to the least shadow of temptation will never be in danger of being overcome by the greatest. Were the good man of the house always on the watch, the thief could never break in and spoil his goods;³¹ and if the Christian would not indulge

⁵¹² Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400), 1974, *The Tales Of Canterbury*, *Complete Geoffrey Chaucer*, Prologue, 18, lines 524-528, as Chaucer wrote it in Middle English. Translation notes are mine.

⁵¹³ Albert Outler, Appendix F, BCE 4:548.

⁵¹⁴ *SERMON 12: The Witness of Our Own Spirit*, BCE 1:300, 312.

himself in the full enjoyment of that liberty which he thinks allowed, but conscientiously abstain from *some* of those worldly good things, which he sees his brethren use intemperately, it would be as probable a means to preserve him from falling as can be conceived.⁵¹⁵

Thus far, it has been shown that an overly keen awareness of sin in their lives could be a major factor concerning their depression. Charles writes, above in bold font, concerning his desire for his conscience to be scrupulous, but where should, or could, one draw the line that separates the scrupulous from the over-scrupulous conscience? Late in life, in 1788, John finally writes about the problem of a *spiced* conscience, that is, an overly-sensitive conscience, in his Sermon 105, entitled, *On Conscience*.

But sometimes this excellent quality, *tenderness* of conscience, is carried to an extreme. We find some who fear where no fear is, who are continually condemning themselves without cause; imagining some things to be sinful which the Scripture nowhere condemns; and supposing other things to be their duty which the Scripture nowhere enjoins. This is properly termed a 'scrupulous' conscience, and is a sore evil. It is highly expedient to yield to it as little as possible; rather it is a matter of earnest prayer that you may be delivered from this sore evil, and may recover a sound mind: to which nothing would contribute more than the converse of a pious and judicious friend.⁵¹⁶

Wesley does not tell us how he learned this truth, but the answer becomes obvious: he learned it through his own experiences. Yet, he is reluctant to fully endorse his admission, directly above, for he continues with this cautionary warning:

But the extreme which is opposite to this is far more dangerous. A 'hardened' conscience is a thousand times more dangerous than a scrupulous one: that can violate a plain command of God without any self-condemnation, either doing what he has expressly forbidden, or neglecting what he has expressly commanded, and yet without any remorse; yea, perhaps glorying in this very hardness of heart! Many instances of this deplorable stupidity we meet with at this day—and even among people that suppose themselves to have no small share of religion. A person is doing something which the Scripture clearly forbids. You ask, 'How do you dare to do this?' and are answered with perfect unconcern, 'Oh, my heart does not condemn me.' I reply: 'So much the worse. I would to God it did. You would then be in a safer state than you are now. It is a dreadful thing to be condemned by the Word of God, and yet not to be condemned by your own heart!' If we can break the least of the known commands of God without any self-condemnation, it is plain, the god of this world hath hardened our hearts. If we do not soon recover from this we shall be 'past feeling', and our consciences (as St. Paul speaks) will be 'seared as with a hot iron'.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁵ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, Sermon 14, undated, 295. Bold font is mine.

⁵¹⁶ JW, *Sermon 12: The Witness of Our Own Spirit*, BCE 1:300, 312BCE 3:487; Underlining mine.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., Parentheses are Wesley's.

Both Wesley brothers were eventually able to come to a practical scriptural balance on the point of a spiced conscience, for they enjoyed the last part of their lives without noticeable depression. Indeed, in 1780, as he nears the age of eighty, John writes that he had never felt depression, or in his language “lowness of spirits,” not even for as little as “one quarter of an hour since [he] was born!”

Amidst our plenty something still
To me, to thee, to him is wanting⁵¹⁸!

That *something* is neither more nor less than the knowledge and love of God—without which no spirit [creature]⁵¹⁹ can be happy either in heaven or earth.

2. Permit me to cite my own experience in confirmation of this. I distinctly remember that even in my childhood, even when I was at school, I have often said: 'They say the life of a schoolboy is the happiest in the world, but I am sure I am not happy. For I always want something which I have not; therefore I am not content, and so cannot be happy.' When I had lived a few years longer, being in the vigour of youth, a stranger to pain and sickness, and particularly to lowness of spirits (which I do not remember to have felt one quarter of an hour since I was born), having plenty of all things, in the midst of sensible and amiable friends who loved me, and I loved them; and being in the way of life which of all others suited my inclinations; still I was not happy! I wondered why I was not, and could not imagine what the reason was. The reason certainly was: I did not know God, the source of present as well as eternal happiness.⁵²⁰

This passage is interesting for several reasons, not least of which is his claim that he had never suffered from depression. The second point of interest is that John believes that genuine happiness is only possible when one knows – that is, daily experiences, senses, or *feels* - God, who is “the source of present as well as eternal happiness.” This concept undoubtedly plays a part in the episodes of depression from which both brothers periodically suffered, for they believed that sin, even the sin detected by an over- scrupulous conscience, would separate one from the presence of God, and it was that perceived loss of the sense of the presence of God which they believed to have confirmed the judgment of their respective consciences: they were Christian failures, a motive, indeed, for spiritual depression!

John’s Aldersgate experience occurred on May 24, 1738, and in order to gain a better perspective of his bouts of depression, the reader is invited to consider two of his Journal entries. The first is written on May 28, 1738, and this entry provides context for the second Journal entry of January 4, 1739, which entry contains his *reflections* concerning the incident of May 28, 1738, and wherein he, John, is the

⁵¹⁸ “Wanting” = needed.

⁵¹⁹ Albert Outler comments in a footnote that when this sermon was printed in the Arminian Magazine, the text reads ‘creature,’ rather than ‘spirit.’

⁵²⁰ John Wesley, Sermon 77, *Spiritual Worship*, BCE 3:97-98. Only underlining is mine.

principal character. Ward and Heitzenrater, in their footnote **29**, found at the end of the first line of the 1739 entry, says that “there is no doubt that he [John] himself wrote these reflections and that the reference in the first sentence is to an embarrassing episode [involving John]” which occurred at Mr. Hutton’s house on May 28, 1738, only four days after his Aldersgate experience.

Below, is the incident concerning John’s actions; the entry of Sat., the 27th is included only for context, and the focus of this entry is on joy or the lack thereof.

Sat. [May 27, 1738]. Believing one reason of my want of joy was want of time for prayer, I resolved to do no business till I went to church in the morning, but to continue pouring out my heart before him. And this day my spirit was enlarged; so that though I was now also assaulted by many temptations, I was more than conqueror, gaining more power thereby to trust and to rejoice in God my Saviour.

Footnote 90, below, contains the actual description of John’s behavior that will later become the subject of his reflections:

Sun. 28, [May, 1738]. I waked in peace, but not in joy. In the same even quiet state I was till the evening, when I was roughly attacked in a large company as an enthusiast, a seducer, and a setter-forth of new doctrines.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ This episode is described in a letter from Mrs. E. Hutton to Samuel Wesley, June 6, 1738, she having offered hospitality in her house to the Wesleys’ meetings after Samuel Wesley, who had been entertaining them, left town: ‘. . . your brother John seems to be turned a wild enthusiast, or fanatic, and, to our very great affliction, is drawing our two children into these wild notions, by their great opinion of Mr. John’s sanctity and judgment. It would be a great charity to many other honest well-meaning simple souls, as well as to my children, if you could either confine, or convert, Mr. John when he is with you. For after his behaviour on Sunday the 28th May, when you hear it, you will think him not quite a right man.

‘Without ever acquainting Mr. Hutton with any of his notions or designs, when Mr. Hutton had ended a sermon of Bishop Blackall’s, which he had been reading in his study to a great number of people; Mr. John got up, and told the people that five days before he was not a Christian, and this he was as well assured of as that five days before he was not in that room, and the way for them all to be Christians was to believe, and own, that they were not now Christians. Mr. Hutton was much surprised at this unexpected injudicious speech, but only said, “Have a care, Mr. Wesley, how you despise the benefits received by the two sacraments.” I not being in the study when this speech was made, had heard nothing of it when he came into the parlour to supper, where were my two children, two or three other of his deluded followers, two or three ladies who board with me, my niece, and two or three gentlemen of Mr. John’s acquaintance, though not got into his new notions.⁵²¹

Below, written in 1739, are John’s reflections about his own actions of May 28, 1738:

Thursday, January 4[, 1739]

One who had had the form of godliness many years wrote the following reflections:²⁹ My friends affirm *I am mad*, because I said ‘I was not a Christian a year ago.’ I affirm, I am

⁵²¹ JWJ, W. Reginald Ward, and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., BCE 18: 252.

not a Christian now. Indeed, what I might have been I know not, had I been faithful to the grace then given, when, expecting nothing less, I received such a sense of the forgiveness of my sins as till then I never knew. But that I am not a Christian at this day I as assuredly know as that Jesus is the Christ.

For a Christian is one who has the fruits of the Spirit of Christ, which (to mention no more) are love, peace, joy. But these I have not. I have not any love of God. I do not love either the Father or the Son. Do you ask, How do I know whether I love God? I answer by another question, How do you know whether you love me? Why, as you know whether you are hot or cold. You *feel* this moment that you do or do not love me. And I *feel* this moment I do not love God; which therefore I *know*, because I *feel* it. There is no word more proper, more clear, or more strong.

And I know it also by St. John's plain rule, 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.' For I love the world. I desire the things of the world, some or other of them, and have done all my life. I have always placed some part of my happiness in some or other of the things that are seen. Particularly in meat and drink, and in the company of those I loved. My desire, if not in a gross and lustful, yet in a more subtle and refined manner, has been almost continually running out towards this or that person. For many years I have been, yea, and still am, hankering after a happiness in loving and in being loved by one or another. And in these I have from time to time taken more pleasure than in God. Nay, I do so at this day. I often ask my heart, when I am in company with one that I love, 'Do I take more delight in you or in God?' And cannot but answer, *In you*. For in truth I do not delight in God at all. Therefore I am so far from loving God with all my heart that whatever I love at all, I love more than God. So that all the love I have is flat idolatry.

Again, joy in the Holy Ghost I have not. I have now and then some starts of joy in God: but it is not *that* joy. For it is not abiding. Neither is it greater than I have had on some worldly occasions. So that I can in no wise be said to 'rejoice evermore', much less to 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory'.

Yet again, I have not 'the peace of God'; *that* peace, peculiarly so called. The peace I have may be easily accounted for on natural principles. I have health, strength, friends, a competent fortune, and a composed, cheerful temper. Who would not have a sort of peace in such circumstances? But I have none which can with any truth or propriety be called a peace which passeth all understanding.

From hence I conclude (and let all the 'saints of the world' hear, that whereinsoever they boast they may be found even as I), though I have given, and do give, all my goods to feed the poor, I am not a Christian. Though I have endured hardship, though I have in all things denied myself and taken up my cross, I am not a Christian. My works are nothing, my sufferings are nothing; I have not the fruits of the Spirit of Christ. Though I have constantly used all the means of grace for twenty years, I am not a Christian. Yea, though I have all (other) faith, since I have not 'that faith' which 'purifieth the heart'. Verily, verily I say unto you, I 'must be born again'. For except I, and you, be born again, we 'cannot see the kingdom of God'⁵²²

First, there are limits as to how far one can trust one's emotions, especially if reason is set aside, or if reason is faulty; emotion and reason must work together. John exceeded these limits when he gauged his relationship with God mostly on the basis of how much, or little, he *felt* the presence of God. Clearly, above, whether intentional or not, John makes a strong case for his own ensuing depressions. These

⁵²² JWJ, BCE 19:29-31. Italics and parentheses are Wesley's.

two lengthy entries provide an in-depth look into John's painfully honest thinking, thinking that supports the suggestion that he is suffering from, in John's own words, a "*tenderness of conscience*"⁵²³ that is carried to an extreme, which is the same as an overly sensitive, or a spiced, conscience. Also, both John and Charles, through their long struggles leading up to their respective Aldersgate experiences, had felt real, and prolonged, despair; therefore, they both were very familiar with this malady. It is entirely reasonable that a man of John's sensitive temperament, especially with regard to minor sins of infirmity, could fall into, what Outler⁵²⁴ calls, *religious depression*.

The issue, above, is whether or not John is a Christian. Due to faulty, and perhaps hasty, reasoning John had, in his attempt to be brutally honest with himself, decided, to his great sorrow, that he was not a Christian because he could not see that he produced any fruit of the Spirit.

By Friday, October 9th, 1738, John's reasoning ability was at last able to sort out, and bring order and fresh meaning to, his Aldersgate experience. In this passage, John is wrestling with whether or not he, John, is a new creature in Christ; whether or not he is, indeed, a Christian. John was reading a publication written by Jonathan Edwards, entitled, 1737, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God, work*, that provided details concerning the Great Awakening in New England, under the leadership of Edwards. Wesley exclaimed, as a reaction to reading the book: "Surely 'this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'!" John eventually abridges and publishes Edwards's treatise, under the same title, in 1744; he also acknowledges Edwards as the original author.

This lengthy citation, below, is interesting for several reasons. First, it shows the methodical thinking of Wesley; he uses the methodology of proposal and conclusion, and ends with the conclusion to the whole matter of the state of his own faith, with the words, "I trust;" he does not try to justify himself. One of his most significant statements is, "other desires often *arise* in my heart. But they do not *reign*."

⁵²³ Op. Cit., Sermon 105, BCE 3:487.

⁵²⁴ Albert Outler, BCE 2:203, in *An Introductory Comment to Sermons 46 & 47*.

On Monday 9 [October, 1738] I set out for Oxford. In walking I read the truly surprising narrative of the conversions lately wrought in and about the town of Northampton in New England.⁵²⁵ Surely 'this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'!

An extract⁵²⁶ from this I wrote to a friend, concerning the state of those who are 'weak in faith'. His answer, which I received on Saturday 14, threw me into great perplexity, till after crying to God I took up a Bible, which opened on these words: 'And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldst bless me indeed and enlarge my coast! And that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.'

This, however, with a sentence in the Evening Lesson, put me upon considering my own state more deeply. And what then occurred to me was as follows:

'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.' Now the surest test whereby we can examine ourselves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul: 'If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold all things are become new.'

First, his judgments are new: his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness.

He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God; to have no good thing abiding in him, but all that is corrupt and abominable; in a word, to be wholly earthly, sensual, and devilish — a motley mixture of beast and devil.

Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

Again, his judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure (so called), or indeed in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth but in the enjoyment of God and in the foretaste of those 'rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore'.

Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

Yet again, his judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing, to consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is the life of God in the soul; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart; an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of him that created it.

Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

Secondly, his designs are new. It is the design of his life not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; but to regain the image of God, to have the life of God again planted in his soul, and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness.

This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. **Therefore** I am in this respect a new creature.

Thirdly, his desires are new, and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love and joy and hope, his sorrow and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.

⁵²⁵ The narrative was written by Jonathan Edwards, 1737, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*.

⁵²⁶ Jon. Edwards, abridged by John Wesley, *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God*.

I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often *arise* in my heart. But they do not *reign*. I put them all under my feet through Christ which strengtheneth me. **Therefore** I believe he is *creating* me anew in this also, and that he has begun, though not finished, his work.

Fourthly, his conversation is new. It is ‘always seasoned with salt’, and fit to ‘minister grace to the hearers’.

So is mine, by the grace of God in Christ. **Therefore** in this respect I am a new creature.

Fifthly, his actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. ‘Whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does’, it either springs from, or leads to, the love of God and man.

Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life. **Therefore** in this respect I am a new creature.

But St. Paul tells us elsewhere that ‘the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance.’ Now although, by the grace of God in Christ, I find a measure of some of these in myself, viz. of peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance; yet others I find not. I cannot find in myself the love of God or of Christ. Hence my deadness and wanderings in public prayer. Hence it is that even in the Holy Communion I have rarely any more than a cold attention. Hence when I hear of the highest instance of God’s love, my heart is still senseless and unaffected. Yea, at this moment, I feel no more love to him than to one I had never heard of.

Again, I have not that ‘joy in the Holy Ghost’; no settled, lasting joy. Nor have I such a peace as excludes the possibility either of fear or doubt. When holy men have told me I had no faith, I have often doubted whether I had or no. And those doubts have made me very uneasy, till I was relieved by prayer and the Holy Scriptures.

Yet, **upon the whole**, although I have not yet that joy in the Holy Ghost, nor that love of God shed abroad in my heart, nor the full assurance of faith, nor the (proper) witness of the Spirit with my spirit that I am a child of God, much less am I, in the full and proper sense of the words, in Christ a new creature; **I nevertheless trust** that I have a measure of faith and am ‘accepted in the Beloved’: **I trust** ‘the handwriting that was against me is blotted out’, and that I am ‘reconciled to God through his Son’.⁵²⁷

Wesley’s statement, “other desires often *arise* in my heart. But they do not *reign*,” above, may be the source for his later teaching, examined on page 158 of this thesis, and taken from Sermon 13, *On Sin in Believers*, written in 1763, where he avers that “sin may yet exist in the Christian’s heart, but no longer reign there.”⁵²⁸

In his third point, above, Wesley claims that “other desires often *arise* in my heart. I put them all under my feet through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Then, he reaches this amazing conclusion: “**Therefore** I believe he is *creating* me anew in this [in becoming a new creature, or creation, in Christ] also, and that he has begun,

⁵²⁷ JWJ, BCE 19:16-19. This citation has been formatted for ease of reading. Italics are Wesley’s, bold is mine.

⁵²⁸ Op. cit., BCE 1:327.

though not finished, his work.” The significance of this statement lies in the fact that, here, Wesley is recognizing that an Aldersgate experience is not the terminal point for the growth of holiness in a Christian’s soul and life; it is but a new beginning whereby God continues his act of creation in restoring the image of Christ in that person, an act that began at the very moment that person was justified by Christ.

Wesley says, above, that “other desires often *arise* in my heart.” From where do these alien desires originate? Wesley would answer, “From my carnal mind;” and, the carnal mind’s sole objective is to hinder any and all allegiance one may have to Christ; one’s carnal mind is the primary source of evil in any person. It is through the act of Justification, says Wesley, that the aggregate of one’s *sins* are nailed to Christ’s cross and annihilated; but, it is through the process of Sanctification that the human bent for *sin* is dealt with... by the killing of the carnal mind. The purpose of an Aldersgate experience, borne out of struggle and despair, is not just to break the power of the carnal mind, but to kill it; it is the culmination of that struggle which produces an Aldersgate experience; and, the struggle, itself, is really a battle between the mind of Christ (that one receives at one’s Justification), with one’s own carnal mind. The outcome of an Aldersgate experience is that while sin, that is, the carnal mind, *may* still exist in a Christian, it now no longer reigns in that person; now, John can honestly declare, because he is now empowered by the Holy Spirit to do so, “I put them [evil desires] all under my feet through Christ which strengtheneth me.” This paragraph captures the intent, thrust, and meaning of John’s, and Charles’s, entire ministry.

Finally, John announces the result of his lengthy and logical deliberation: “Yet, **upon the whole... I nevertheless trust... I trust...** that I am ‘reconciled to God through his Son’.” Earlier, it was presented that faith is taking God at his word; here, John is giving his sole reason for believing that he is reconciled to God, and that single reason is because he takes God at his word: God *said* that he was reconciled.

This thesis describes the battle between evil emotions and godly ones; between the carnal mind and the mind of Christ. There are many roles for emotion in Wesley’s soteriology, and in the life of the Christian; the battle between these two opposing minds is decided by the relative strength of these emotions. For the Wesley brothers, their desire for God eventually became greater than their desire to

trust in themselves; through this struggle they each learned that the joy in Christ far outweighed the fleeting happiness offered by this world.

The Wesleyan legacy lives on through the millions of people who continue to teach what the Wesley brothers' believed. One such soul was Louisa Stead (1850-1917), a Methodist missionary to Africa, who wrote, around 1881, one of this writer's favorite hymns: *'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus*, below. The lyrics of this hymn contain a powerful Wesleyan message that is as true today as it was in Stead's, and even in John's and Charles's, day; this hymn contains a summary of the Wesley brothers' ministry. Please note the language that Stead uses to express the concept of *faith*, which is found in the second line of the first stanza: "Just to take Him at His word." This phrase precisely matches that used by McLaughlin (1851-1933), who was introduced to the reader on pages 113-114; each of the four lines comprising the first verse have exactly the same meaning.

*Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus*⁵²⁹

1. 'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to take Him at His word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
Just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

3. Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life, and rest, and joy, and peace.

Refrain: Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've prov'd Him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more!

Refrain

2. O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
Just in simple faith to plunge me
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood!

4. I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.

Refrain

Refrain

Verse two, third line, recalls Wesley's use of the phrase, "simple faith," a phrase that means "*pure faith*, unmixed with unbelief," a favorite theme of the Wesley brothers, and a theme that is completely compatible with the other three lines in this stanza: "trust in Jesus" – "His cleansing blood" – and, "the healing, cleansing flood!" This hymn is still in popular use today, and it is therefore important to retain, and pass on, the special eighteenth-century meaning of this word: *simple*.

⁵²⁹ Louisa M. R. Stead (1850-1917), Hymn 46, in *Songs of Triumph*, 1882, edited by Rev. John Swanel Inskip (1816-1884).

The third stanza relates “trust in Jesus” with the concept of “sin and self to cease;” that is, sin and the carnal mind no longer reign in the believer. Here, Stead is not preaching sinless perfection, but she does say that *now* the believer is enabled to say, “No!,” to sin and the carnal mind, one occasion at time.

The fourth verse is a summary of this hymn, and stressed the fact that the believer *knows*, that is, can *sense* or *feel* that Christ is now with them, and faithfully will remain with them to the end of their life. This verse also summarizes the emotion that is contained within each stanza: the believer knows joy: “I’m so glad;” and deeply loves God: “Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend.” Here, joy comes from Christ as a blessing to the believer, because they love and obey God, who first loved them. This expression of the reciprocal love that exists between God and his child is a typical Wesleyan theme, and in this fourth stanza God’s love for the believer is strongly implied. Love is the cord that bonds the believer to God.

The first line in each stanza also forms a thematic unity that culminates in joy and love, in and for the believer:

1. ‘Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
2. O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
3. Yes, ’tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
4. I’m so glad I learned to trust Thee

This hymn does not express that mature believers have any regret in placing their trust in Jesus; indeed, with feelings of deep love for God, in each refrain it is fervently declared: “Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! / O for grace to trust Him more!”

Perhaps the deep trust that the believer finally has in Jesus may explain why, “as he nears the age of eighty, John writes that he had never felt depression, or in his language ‘lowness of spirits,’ not even for as little as ‘one quarter of an hour since [he] was born!’”⁵³⁰ A thematic unity can be found throughout each of the last lines of each stanza.

1. Just to know, “Thus saith the Lord,”
2. ‘Neath the healing, cleansing flood!
3. Life, and rest, and joy, and peace
4. Wilt be with me to the end.

As an aside, it is interesting to read a small part of the history behind the writing of this hymn. The author, Louisa Stead, who felt her call to the mission field as a

⁵³⁰ See this thesis, 172, for more discussion: JW, Sermon 77, *Spiritual Worship*, BCE 3:97-98.

child, was married in 1875. One day, sometime during the year 1880, she and her husband, with their four-year-old daughter, went to the beach at Long Island Sound, in New York. While eating lunch on the beach, her husband heard the cries of a boy who was drowning in the sea. Mr. Stead immediately leaped into the water, and swam to the terrified boy, who, amidst his struggles, pulled Mr. Stead under the water, and both were drowned. During the ensuing days, as she wrestled with God in trying to understand why such a thing should happen to her, the meaningful words of this hymn were written.⁵³¹

That she could write this hymn after such a life-changing tragedy is amazing, for, remarkably, this hymn does not have the slightest element of regret, or sorrow, or even a wistful look back to her past - her focus is only upon Christ; what is even more amazing is the fact that this hymn came about only through the agony of despair and depression that she felt as she wrestled with God, and yet it expresses only love for, and unconditional trust in, Jesus. One's imagination can legitimately fill in the details of this battle by recalling that the Wesley brothers also battled with God through the elements of agony, and despair, and depression which the brothers had experienced. The roles of emotion, both in the writing of her hymn, and the hymn, itself, is of major importance, for these roles define the channels that are used by God to bring healing to the human personality. Likewise, through the channels of emotion, God also brought healing to John Wesley, even to the point where he could no longer remember his former agonies. This writer does not believe that John simply forgot about his former depression and its causes; John received healing that only the hand of God can deliver. What was the result of receiving "the healing, cleansing flood" that was delivered by the hand of God? Both the Wesley brothers, and Louisa Stead, were filled with the Holy Spirit and joy, their memories were healed (although they never forgot their former struggles), and their bond with Christ became the unbreakable bond of reciprocal love.

Assurance

Significant material dealing with *assurance* is presented throughout this chapter, and especially during the analysis of the depression of John and Charles Wesley, but this material will not be repeated here.

⁵³¹ C. Michael Hawn, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-tis-so-sweet-to-trust-in-jesus> accessed 24 May, 2019.

The Wesley brothers finally, after much agony, understood that one is saved by faith... alone... and Outler gives a brief outline of John's development of his doctrine of assurance in his introduction to the sermons of John Wesley.⁵³² Shortly after John's Aldersgate experience, and his meetings with the Moravians, he encounters Edwards' *A Faithful Narrative of a Surprizing Work of God in New England*,⁵³³ and this book, coupled with the overall effect of these various meetings, was to cause him to revert to his Anglican roots as encapsulated in the Edwardian Homilies for a clearer understanding of the doctrine of assurance.⁵³⁴ Wesley abridges homilies one through four under the title of *The Doctrine of salvation, Faith and Good Works*, and by doing so he creates a fundamental change in his own understanding of the *ordo salutis* – “away from holy living as a precondition to saving faith [works], to faith itself [faith alone] as the threshold of any valid experience of true holiness.”⁵³⁵ John writes that “our part [in justification is to have a] true and lively [, or living rather than dead,] faith in the merits of Jesus Christ.”

One definition of faith that was cited earlier in this chapter is: faith is taking God at his word. This reframing of the meaning of faith makes clear the basis of one's *confidence* that God has, indeed, justified them; we know for sure because, and only because, God *said so*; he said he would justify us, and this statement reflects what Wesley means when he says one is saved by faith alone; one can know that one truly is pardoned based on the fact that God says we are pardoned; therefore, there is no room for dependence on feelings or emotions. *Assurance*, on the other hand, does involve emotion and feelings and this distinction between confidence and assurance becomes vital. Faith in God, that is, trusting that God means what he says, by taking God at his word... is the basis, the foundation upon which justification and sanctification are built. Faith is the *cause* of one's justification or sanctification; assurance is the *result* of one's justification or sanctification – and not vice versa.

One theological difference between John and Charles concerning their doctrine of assurance is that John tends to be harder, that is, more dogmatic about receiving God's assurance, and it is this insistence that sometimes causes the seeker to experience an anxiety that can lead to spiritual depression; Charles taught a softer

⁵³² Albert Outler, *Introduction*, in BCE 1:4-5.

⁵³³ Op. Cit., Jonathan Edwards, 1738.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 1:4, footnote 17. The date is Nov. 12, 1738.

⁵³⁵ Ibid., Albert Outler, 1:4. The earliest copy that I found is dated 1739; Outler intimates the earliest copy was printed in 1738 (footnote 17). Wesley's book is also in the BCE 12:27-43, Randy Maddox, ed.,

version of assurance, and perhaps it was Charles's own propensity toward spiritual depression that tempered his hardness. In any case, Outler makes this observation in his preface to *Sermon 6, The Righteousness of Faith*, concerning this difference between the brothers.

John Wesley was not as ebullient an orator as George Whitefield or even his brother Charles. And yet his preaching in the years just after 1738 seems to have been attended with more hysterical responses from his hearers. In the *Journal*, June 12, 1742, he records preaching on 'the righteousness of faith' from his father's tombstone at Epworth. 'While I was speaking several dropped down as dead; and among the rest such a cry was heard of sinners groaning for the righteousness of faith as almost drowned my voice.' An even more tumultuous scene in Wapping is recounted in the *Journal*, June 15, 1739. Hysterical phenomena, as side effects of his preaching, receive an occasional mention in the *Journal* from 1739 through 1744. They seem to have tapered off thereafter.⁵³⁶

Outler summarizes the following point which he gleans from Holland's article, *A Species of Madness: the Effect of John Wesley's Early Preaching*:

[that] whereas Whitefield and Charles Wesley sought consciously (and fervently) to drive their hearers to a 'conviction of sin', they spared them the extremes of *despair* by suggesting that once penitents began to 'groan' *for* faith, this was in itself a proleptic sign of their acceptance even before their conscious sense of assurance of forgiveness.⁵³⁷

Outler also cites⁵³⁸ Horne on Charles's viewpoint, and here is Horne's full statement:

So far was Mr. C. Wesley from denouncing wrath on sincere Penitents, that while urging them, to a more luminous and explicit faith, he comforted them, by insinuating that they were in a salvable state. He told them they had the faith of God's Servants, though they were not yet sealed, as his Sons, by the loving Spirit of Adoption.⁵³⁹

Horne continues, on the next page, and makes this statement concerning John's viewpoint on this matter:

To the best of my recollection, Mr. J. Wesley did not admit this distinction into his pulpit: yet Dr. Whitehead, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Moore acknowledge, that he allowed its truth.

With this understanding of the difference between the brothers on this point, this writer shall proceed.

As can be seen through Charles's poetry, below, the assurance that one receives from God after one is justified, or reconciled with God - is *attested*, which is another word for evidence or assurance, by first of all, "an inward peace of conscience."

⁵³⁶ Op. Cit., Albert C. Outler, BCE 1:200. Italics are Outler's.

⁵³⁷ Ibid., Barnard Holland, WHS XXXIX.77-85. Parentheses are Outler's, brackets mine.

⁵³⁸ Ibid.

⁵³⁹ Melville Horne (1761-1841), 1809, *An Investigation of the Definition of Justifying Faith*, 28.

The first of these [signs] is reconciliation with God attested by an inward peace of conscience, even the peace of God which passeth all understanding, bequeathed unto us by our parting Lord. This [inward peace of conscience] immediately springs from a sense of forgiveness; faith, pardon and peace...⁵⁴⁰

Other signs, such as living a holy life will also follow, for these signs are exclusively a *result* of sanctification.

Charles, in his Journal entry for August 17, 1738, records the testimony given by one of his recent converts:

Thursday, August 17. Preached faith to a dying woman and administered the Sacrament. She was satisfied God had sent us, told me I was the instrument of saving her soul... Mrs. Brockmer... asked me to go and see the sick woman again. Preached faith to a large company I found there. The [sick] woman bore a noble testimony. I asked her before them all: "Have you received forgiveness?" Her answer was, "Yes, I am assured of it by Christ himself." To them she said, they must not *think* they believe, but *feel* it, and have a full confidence thereof. They all thanked me much.⁵⁴¹

Here, Charles is affirming the reality of faith, a faith that can be, in twenty-first century parlance, *emotionally felt*, as he rightly taught the dying woman; the feelings expressed by Charles in this *Journal* entry now become an integral part of the Wesley brothers' doctrine of assurance. Charles wrote the following lines in his Journal on May 21, 1738, immediately after his Aldersgate experience concerning faith as the sole cause of what he had just experienced:

*I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. . . . I saw that by faith I stood; by the continual support of faith, which kept me from falling, though of myself I am ever sinking into sin.*⁵⁴²

Shortly before his own Aldersgate experience Charles wrote the following lines of faith in his journal, lines that depict what now, for the first time, becomes the basis of his hope in God:

I waked in hope and expectation of his coming. At nine my brother and some friends came and sang an hymn to the Holy Ghost. My comfort and hope were hereby increased. In about half an hour they went. I betook myself to prayer; the substance as follows: "*O Jesus, thou hast said, I will come unto you. Thou hast said, I will send the Comforter to you. My father and I will come unto you, and make our abode with you. Thou art God who canst not lie. I wholly rely upon thy most true promise. Accomplish it in thy time and manner.*"⁵⁴³

⁵⁴⁰ Kenneth Newport, *The Sermons of Charles Wesley*, 2001, "Sermon 5, Titus 3:8," 174. Brackets mine.

⁵⁴¹ Kimbrough and Newport, 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:143. Italics are Wesley's, brackets are mine.

⁵⁴² S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport, eds., 2008, *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 1:108. Italics mine.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1:106. Italics and underlining mine.

Charles is finally acknowledging that the basis for his hope of having the defaced image of Christ in him renewed is solely by faith, by only taking God at his word.

Charles had said, above, that this peace is felt through one's conscience. Please recall that feelings are the inward reaction to an emotional event... and thus sensed through one's emotional faculties. Therefore, another role of emotion in justification or sanctification is to provide an avenue through which God gives the penitent the healing comfort of assurance that they are, indeed, finally reconciled with God despite the fact that they had resisted God for such a long time in unbelief; for the peace of God also necessarily includes receiving God's love. Assurance is God's way of telling Bunyan's poor, stubborn Christiana who finally submits to God in total surrender, that he loves her; the basis upon which she is saved remains solely based on the fact that God gave his word to her, and us, that he *would* justify, and sanctify, her, and us. For this reason, Charles writes in his diary concerning his assurance, his conviction, that God, indeed, has touched him:

The Day Of Pentecost [Whitsunday]

Sunday, May 21, 1738

...I ... felt in the meantime a strange palpitation of heart, I said, yet feared to say, "I believe, I believe!"

... Still I felt a violent opposition and reluctance to believe. Yet still the Spirit of God strove with my own and the evil spirit, till by degrees he chased away the darkness of my unbelief.

*I found myself convinced - I knew not how, nor when - and immediately fell to intercession.*⁵⁴⁴

Charles's emotional experience was too fresh for him to analyze now... all he could do here is acknowledge that something had happened that assured him he was not merely dreaming. What had happened was real because he could really *feel* God's love, for one of the roles of God's love is to beget love in us, both... for God... and for one's fellow human beings; and that is exactly what happened to Charles, as his own testimony witnesses.

Emotion in Poetry and Music

Crawshaw wrote that:

It is in the musical and highly emotional language of poetry that human speech attains its greatest heights and manifests its greatest powers and achieves its greatest results.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 1:106-107. Brackets and italics are mine.

⁵⁴⁵ William H. Crawshaw (1861-), 1931, *The Indispensable Soul*, 190.

One of the most prolific poets of all time, Charles Wesley left a theological legacy to the world that has never been equaled, partly because of its richly enhanced theological content and by the perspicuity of its author concerning humanity's relationship with, and responsibilities to, God. It is from the fruits of this legacy that this thesis draws.

Although John Wesley wrote a number of fine hymns, especially concerning his translation of a number of German hymns, this section will primarily examine hymns written by his brother, Charles. Generally, John was in agreement with Charles's wording in his hymns, but occasionally they did differ, and on very rare occasions failed to come to agreement. Most of the hymnals printed by the Wesley brothers were done so under both brothers' names, and individual hymns generally did not include an author credit. One notable exception is the two-volume 1749 edition, entitled *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, by Charles Wesley, Student of Christ-Church, Oxford.

One special characteristic of the Wesley hymns is their strong theme of "biblical theology;" they are "intellectually disciplined" hymns that are moored "to Christian doctrine," and always leads the worshipper "away from himself" and toward "the communion of saints" and to Christ.⁵⁴⁶ Thus far, a number of hymns or pieces of hymns have been examined, and the bulk of the Christian doctrine contained therein concerns various aspects of the two grand theological themes of Methodism: Justification or Reconciliation, and Sanctification.

One of the main purposes of the Wesleys' hymns is to teach the congregants theology, and to help them to remember Methodist doctrine. Many of the Wesleyan hymns constitute a class of evocative poetry of such quality that "its words call forth images that are immediately sensible⁵⁴⁷ and personally relevant,"⁵⁴⁸ and, when sung in churches, or in private devotion, not only help the people to express their faith but also help them to explore their theology. Beet (1840-1924) wrote that "the real embodiment of Methodist theology is the Methodist Hymn-Book, and especially Charles Wesley's hymns."⁵⁴⁹ John Wesley wrote the following lines in his Preface

⁵⁴⁶ Erik Routley, 1959, 2nd ed., *Hymns and Human Life*, 71.

⁵⁴⁷ I.e., readily perceived through one's feelings and emotions; appreciable, or important enough to be noticed.

⁵⁴⁸ S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., 1987, *Lost In Wonder, Charles Wesley, The Meaning of His Hymns Today*, 11.

⁵⁴⁹ Joseph Agar Beet (1840-1924), *London Quarterly Review*, January 1921, cited in Edward H. Sugden (1854-1935), 1951, "Wesley's Standard Sermons," 2:342. J. Ernest Rattenbury (1870-1963),

to the 1780 Methodist Hymnal, entitled *A Collection of Hymns, for the Use of the People Called Methodists*:

What we want is a collection neither too large, that it may be cheap and portable, nor too small, that it may contain a sufficient variety for all ordinary occasions. Such a hymn-book you have now before you. It is not so large as to be either cumbersome or expensive. And it is large enough to contain such a variety of hymns as will not soon be worn threadbare. It is large enough to contain all the important truths of our most holy religion, whether speculative or practical; yea, to illustrate them all, and to prove them both by Scripture and reason. And this is done in a regular order. The hymns are not carelessly jumbled together, but carefully ranged under proper heads, according to the experience of real Christians. So that this book is in effect a little body of experimental and practical divinity.⁵⁵⁰

Thus, the Methodist Hymn-Book is the closest approach to the systematic theology of the Calvinists,⁵⁵¹ and its importance is even greater than the voluminous prose of John Wesley, but can this claim be substantiated? This writer believes that emotion and feelings, together, constitute the key to understanding this claim, and that neuroscience can provide the viewing lens necessary to see the truth of this claim.

Siegel has investigated the relationship between music and emotion and supports the statement that “music has been described as one of the purest expressions of emotions that exists.”⁵⁵² He continues:

Emotion is inherently a subjective and an interpersonal experience, involving interaction with the environment and the evaluation of meaning. Experiences evoke within us textured subjective states that create the fabric of our lives. It is filled with contours and spacing, varied intensities, and modulations in sound.

We could call primary emotions the “music of the mind.” The process of creating and listening to music is a form of emotional experience and affective communication that is profoundly integrative.

Emotions fill us with a sense of connection to others. They link families together; they remind us of who is important in our lives. Emotions make life worth living.⁵⁵³

Singing – music – and all that is entailed in music, is, therefore, a multi-faceted *emotional experience* that provides an avenue for connecting with others, including our own families, and becomes a means to evaluate which relational ties are most important; this is a form of bonding, whether within the nuclear family, the church family, or with God.

3rd ed., 1954, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns*, 61, mistakenly attributes this quotation to Sugden, although his page reference is correct. Thomas A. Langford, in S. T. Kimbrough, 1992, *Charles Wesley, Poet and Theologian*, also errs by attributing this citation to Sugden, by citing Rattenbury, 97.

⁵⁵⁰ John Wesley, cited in Hildebrandt and Beckerlegge, BCE 7:73-74.

⁵⁵¹ That is, prior to Richard Watson (1781-1833), or Adam Clarke (1760-1832).

⁵⁵² Daniel J. Siegel, 2012, *The Developing Mind; How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*; 2nd Ed., 178.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 178-179, 183.

The prose of John Wesley is powerful because he knows what he is talking about through his own experiences, he writes clearly without pretense, and he organizes his sermons and other writings for the most effective presentation. John conveys knowledge, accurately and clearly, to the reader who cognitively processes that information. Yet, his writings cannot compete with the poetry of Charles, not because Charles is a better writer but because Charles uses a different medium of communication, namely poetry that is often set to music. Presenting theological information through singing allows the congregation to strengthen the bond between each other and with God.

Siegel is saying that “the process of creating and listening to music is a form of emotional experience.”⁵⁵⁴ It is obvious that whether one individual or an entire congregation are singing or are listening to others sing, that one and all are creating music in their minds. What may not be so obvious is that this mental creation of music also creates an emotional experience which in turn generates internal feelings and external emotions that enable the capacity of each individual to connect with others, and if this connection involves theological precepts, these precepts can become shared values. The writings of both John and Charles are equally vital to Methodism, and each has his place; but together, they become a powerful engine that actually reshapes their world, and continues to do so to this day. This writer sees no rivalry between these brothers for they do not compete, but rather complement each other.

Emotion and Memory

An essential aspect of explicit memory is forgetting, a necessary characteristic needed for efficient human functioning, because the accumulated extraneous images and facts in one’s memory would otherwise become overwhelming.⁵⁵⁵ But, it is also explicit memory that is engaged when one reads, say, a sermon and later wants to remember a point of theology contained therein. Siegel defines explicit memory as

what most people mean when they refer to the generic idea of memory. When explicit recollections are retrieved, they have the internal sensation of “I am remembering.”⁵⁵⁶

The problem arises when memory seems to fail one; the question is: how can memory be enhanced for, say, this situation? Siegel, again, can provide help.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., 179.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., 71.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 56.

Experiences that involve little emotional intensity... have a higher likelihood of being registered as "unimportant" and therefore of not being easily recalled later on. Events experienced with a moderate to high degree of emotional intensity seem to get labeled as "important" and are more easily remembered in the future.⁵⁵⁷

While the Wesley brothers had never heard of neuroscience, they nevertheless intuitively knew that poetry and singing were memory enhancers, and thus, another role of emotion with respect to singing and to reading Charles's poetry is to act as a mechanism to enhance memory. That Methodist congregational singing was, indeed, an emotional experience, and often highly emotional, can easily be proven by the fact that so many of those opposed to Methodism constantly accused the Methodists of eighteenth-century *enthusiasm*.

What generated this enthusiastic (twenty-first century meaning) singing? This writer submits that it was because they had just cause for exuberant song as they sang, for instance, such songs as, *O For a Thousand Tongues*: they were remembering and praising God for what he had done for them, or they were seeking God as their only deliverer; many of them did have the mind of Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit; reasons, indeed, for enthusiastic (twenty-first century meaning) singing. The often high pitch of the emotional experience in singing is a factor in helping them to remember the words, and the theology, of which they were singing.

John and Charles were wise to put all of their theology into verse that was intended to be sung, for this decision insured that Methodism will not be forgotten. Rattenbury said:

[Charles's] hymns gave wings to the doctrines of the Evangelical Revival, so that they flew everywhere; their personal emotional character [of these doctrines] disseminated truth as no other medium could have done.⁵⁵⁸

By means of the Evangelical Revival of which Rattenbury speaks, people began to experience new emotions, both on an individual and a collective level; emotions that necessitated a medium through which to vent them. The emotional character of the Methodist doctrines was brought about by the fact that they were set to music, bursting forth in such results as follows.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid., 71-72.

⁵⁵⁸ John Ernest Rattenbury (1870-1963), 1954, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns*, 3rd ed., 15.

Such sorrow and joy, tears and laughter were without precedent in English Christianity; so were [Charles's] hymns. Long metres and 6 lines 8 could not express what he and the people felt. Metres which danced and flew could do what was impossible to the elephantine tread of more stately measures. The early Methodists were God-intoxicated men.⁵⁵⁹

The poetry and hymns of the Wesley Brothers generated many different emotions in the people, emotions that required a means whereby they could be vented and expressed; thereby generating another role of emotion in Wesley's theology, namely, that of promoting the propagation of the gospel to the unsaved, eventually reaching throughout the domains of John's *parish*. This writer does not feel a need to provide a lengthy proof for this statement, for it stands, *prima facie*.

That the early Methodist do, indeed, experience great emotion as they sing Charles's hymns, can be seen through Rattenbury's emotional, inspiring, and succinct description of seeing Charles Wesley hymns through the eyes of the eighteenth-century worshipper's viewpoint:

We see in these hymns the very soul of the early Methodist, when humbly kneeling at the Cross, he is contemplating its tragedy, wondering at its mystery, adoring the Crucified, coming to the commemorative feast at His table in answer to His invitation, finding in the meal spiritual nourishment and refreshment, humbly expecting, not without result, the grace which comes to obedient and loving souls, realizing that Christ Himself keeps His promise and is in the midst of His own people, laying hold by faith on the benefits He promised to those who kept 'His kindest word', glowing with spiritual and rapturous emotion, questioning whether religion has a higher joy to give, and yet realizing that the heavenly feast is the fullness of which this is but the taste. Charles Wesley's glimpses into Heaven, his visions of the glorified saints, and especially that of the Lamb of God whom he sees crowned, whose glorious scars, five bleeding wounds which plead for him, most of all fill his soul with gladness. As he ponders on the Saviour, ever offering the sacrifice He made below, he longs for the fellowship of his sufferings and in humble love, borne up by faith and hope, cries out, 'Here am I; send me'.⁵⁶⁰

Rattenbury's dramatic description of the tenor of several of Charles's communion hymns defies paraphrasing. The emotional elements of Charles's hymns is prominently mentioned; the thematic content is sharply focused on Christ; Rattenbury's prose allows the reader to see into "the very soul of the early Methodist," and to see the actual source of the Methodist's enthusiasm, emotions not generated by mass hysteria but by love for the very presence of the Lord that is really and truly with them. The genuineness of the scene depicted in this narrative can be easily felt (sensed). It is through the emotional bonding between worshippers

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 38.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 226-227.

that the Church is strengthened, and a most important role it is. In fact, it is only because emotion is still fulfilling its role today that the twenty-first century Christian can identify, and bond, with this eighteenth-century milieu description through the spiritually alive prose of John and the vibrant poetry of Charles; a powerful combination, indeed!

Chapter 4

The Roles of Emotion in Wesley's Soteriology

In the previous chapter, this paper developed an analysis of some of the major roles that emotion plays within the context of the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley. In so doing, this writer has utilized the work, research, and knowledge of a select number of peer-recognized, cognitive, specialty experts, each from one of the many different specialty fields that, collectively, constitute the general categories of neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, or theology, so that a logical argument can be developed that identifies and explores these various roles of emotion found within the Wesleyan corpus.

The combined scientific discoveries of these scientists provide a reliable and verifiable logical basis for understanding how these various emotions function in the life of a human being. Indeed, without the combined help of these scientists, it would be completely impossible to present a creditable paper that investigates this subject, because these scientific specialists, together, are able to provide an objective, scientific viewpoint that is based on empirical evidence; thus, by utilizing their combined knowledge, the reliability of this paper is greatly enhanced.

A Summary

The material presented in this thesis provides evidence that there is no such thing as pure reason, or pure emotion. Indeed, current neuroscientific and psychological theory make the claim that emotion and reason are so intertwined that a cognitive-emotion continuum, similar in concept to the space-time continuum developed by physicists in the early twentieth century, may best describe their relationship. The idea of a continuum has even been extended to the development of the concept of an emotions-feelings continuum. Furthermore, the idea of studying emotion by analyzing which organs of the brain are involved, organs such as the amygdala or the thalamus, is being abandoned in favor of examining neural networks, thanks to the development of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) technology. These same neuroscientists have discovered that cognitive functions and emotions-

feelings often share the same neural networks, and this fact is congruent with the idea of a cognitive-emotional continuum.

The ramifications of these new neuroscientific concepts with respect to Wesley's theology is that now the researcher has several powerful new tools with which to examine mental constructs such as emotions and feelings. One of the most helpful applications of these new neuroscientific tools with respect to this paper is the clarity that is provided in differentiating between, say, an emotion and a feeling, which clarity can equip the researcher to be able to meaningfully examine each of these phenomena. The concept of an emotional-feeling continuum explains how one emotional event, say, Charles's Aldersgate experience, can generate both feelings and emotions, for now it can be seen that they are opposite sides of the same coin with respect to one another. The Wesley brothers were certainly ahead of their time in understanding that feelings are as important as emotions, because the brothers made feelings an important part of their soteriology, as has been amply demonstrated in this paper.

The neuroscientists, psychiatrists, and psychologists to whom reference is made in this thesis all have one thing in common: they ascribe to the cognitive theory of emotion. While there are subtle theoretical differences among these various professionals, they nevertheless share the concept that mental activity, including what we might be thinking at the time, is necessary in order for an emotion to be generated. One facet of the cognitive approach to emotion is that emotions are perceived as motivators, implying *action readiness for change*, and whose purpose is to motivate a person to take some type of action. Even Wesley, himself, uses a cognitive approach to emotion, or in eighteenth-century language, affection, and he understood this characteristic of emotion two hundred years before this concept was discovered in the 1960's. This writer can think of no other approach that would allow the researcher to comprehend, say, Wesleyan despair as a motivator towards godliness!

While the word emotion is universally employed today, there is no consensus among competent authorities with respect to the definition of this word; there are many definitions of emotion, each tailored to accommodate the specialty of the definer; for example, anthropologists consider emotions to be culturally constructed; neuroscientists look at emotion as a culmination of neurological processes; psychologists see emotion as the consciousness of bodily sensation; an evolutionary

psychologist considers emotion to be an evolutionary adaption; and so forth. Therefore, this writer makes no claim whatsoever that his viewpoint of emotion is the only correct way to understand emotion. Indeed, each discipline chooses what it finds to be most helpful in order to understand phenomena that arise in its specific field of research.

Personal bias and Preference

Recognizing the possibly pervasive role of emotion in one's decision-making process can provide an opportunity to enhance the positive and lessen the potential harm that one's negative emotions, one's personal bias or preference, might contribute to the hindering of a right understanding of a text. It is not only advantageous, but also quite necessary in all phases of personal life, that one knows one's self, that is, that one possesses self-awareness, and that one recognizes the presence of one's own bias and preferences, and the role(s) played by one's own emotions in developing decision-making and theological interpretation.

Therefore, one of the primary roles of emotion in Wesley's theology involves the preferences which *the reader* brings to a Wesleyan text, because said preferences, if unrecognized, will necessarily influence one's interpretation of that text. Due to differences in personal preference, each reader can develop a different, perhaps even a contradictory understanding of the same text that may range from the hagiographical to the pejorative perspective.

Developing personal preferences is a completely normal human action, and it would be impossible for a normal person not to develop preferences. It is self-awareness which provides the solution to the problem of allowing personal preferences to unduly influence one as one interprets a particular text. In order to make a sound judgment, interpreters must be cognizant of their own emotional preferences and recognize the role played by their emotions that may be associated with that text.

A Candidate for Salvation

Charles, in a 1737 *pre-Aldersgate experience* sermon, recognizes that "the devil... hath bound him with a thousand chains, the heavy chains of his own vile affections [emotions]," and he uses such words as *inordinate appetite*, *unholy passion*, and *vile affections* to describe his emotional state, which is, therefore, also in need of

salvation.⁵⁶¹ Thus, a special role of emotion in Wesley's theology is as a candidate for salvation. Charles is asking for God to restore the full image of Christ in him, which necessarily includes the restoration of that image in his emotional faculties; he hopes that others will benefit from reading about his difficult battle with his carnal mind.

You must despair before you can hope

Both John and Charles, as Christians who had experienced new birth and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless initially maintained, in practice, the belief that they could become holy partly through the merit of their own good works. Try as he may, John struggled with this problem for about thirteen years; Charles also struggled with the same problem for many years. The challenge for God was to bring them to a point whereby they would discard all self-reliance, self-trust, as well as trust in their own works as they pursued their desire for healing and wholeness, and the restoration of the image of God in them. Aldersgate is the result of God doing just that, and he did it through the various negative emotions that have been examined. Charles, after Aldersgate, said in a sermon that one must despair before one can have hope, just one of a number of negative emotions that God uses to wean us off ourselves.

Charles at last realizes that despair, and so forth, is the result of trying to please God by unlawful means, and the role of despair is to bring one back to God just as one is, sins and all; for God, himself, as Charles finally discovers, is the only means whereby an unholy human being can become holy. This writer's reframing of Psalm 107 in the story of the lost-at-sea sailor who is asked to discard the oars and jump into a shark-filled ocean for salvation helped this writer in feeling, and understanding the pain and the fear that Charles experiences as his Aldersgate day approaches.

In other words, the role for all of these negative emotions is to motivate the miserable sinner to have utter dependency upon God alone so that one is *able* to receive relief through one's full salvation from sin. Agony and despair, generated by one's own choices and actions, become the driving force behind one's total surrender to God. When the Wesley brothers did finally make unconditional surrender, then, and only then, did God bring them each through their own,

⁵⁶¹ See this thesis, 111; this quotation is from Sermon 21, in Kenneth G. Newport, 2001, "The Sermons of Charles Wesley," 364.

customized, Aldersgate experience, an experience that produced a radical change in each of them.

In hindsight, it seems all so *simple* to us, and to Charles and John also, after we finally experience Aldersgate for ourselves, but prior to that experience it took this writer, in his own quest for holiness, ten years to understand with his heart, as well as his head, that one is saved by faith alone, and that alone means *alone*; but that is exactly how the *carnal mind* thinks (that *alone* means faith *plus* merit in one's own works, too!).

Emotional Effects of Aldersgate

The word *love* is often theologically misunderstood; therefore this writer has presented an extensive discussion concerning its meaning in Chapter One. The discussion in this section centers around Charles's Aldersgate experience, but the various roles of emotion discovered here are equally applicable to John.

The context in which the word *love* occurs in Charles's Aldersgate experience indicates, through his use of an adjectival phrase to describe the new condition of his heart, *inflamed with the fire of love*, that Charles is referring to the divine love that comes only from God; *inflamed with the fire of love* is one of his favorite phrases, and can be found no less than forty times in his sermons.

As one examines Charles's Aldersgate experience of May 21st, 1738, two emotions become evident. First, Charles describes how the presence of the Holy Spirit *in* him is felt both emotionally as well as physically, for his (physical) heart rate also begins to significantly increase. Second, he *felt* that his *heart* had become *inflamed with the fire of love* for God and others, and his use of this adjectival phrase, nuanced by the words *inflamed* and *fire*, can account for the increase of his heartrate and his new found desire for intercessory prayer. This is a description of human love exposed to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Wesley's concept in his second reference to the human *heart*, above, in italics, is a metaphysical one, for one's *heart* represents the seat, or center of, the human psyche, or the human personality. He teaches that one's conscience resides here, in one's *heart*, and that God speaks to one through one's conscience. Thus, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," for instance, is *felt* in one's *heart*, and specifically through one's conscience.

The role of love is compound because it can be perceived in two different ways, either internally as a feeling or externally as an emotion; for both are generated from

one and the same emotional experience. Charles *felt* the fire of God's love internally, and he was also motivated by that love to express it externally through intercessory prayer.

The role of the emotion called love is intended to be the spring-board, or the motivator that enables one to respond to God's love, for love is bi-directional in that when God loves us, there is a reciprocating, enabling response initiated within us to also love God. In other words, this same emotional motivator called the love of God can also move us to love others, and to have a living faith in God; likewise it is the role of the emotion called love, which we feel for our neighbor, to move Christians to be kind and merciful to one another.

While the details of John's Aldersgate experience are different from Charles's experience, the actual roles that emotion plays in Charles's experience are exactly the same as those of John's experience.

Assurance

What is the basis of knowing for sure that one has received Salvation? Wesley teaches what he designates as the two grand doctrines of Methodism, which are Justification and Sanctification; Justification deals with one's accumulated sins; Sanctification sets right one's natural propensity to sin in the first place. By faith alone, that is, by simply *taking God at his word*, a sinner who has been reconciled (which includes justification) to God, or has also experienced sanctification (an Aldersgate experience), can know, on the basis of one's *confidence* in God, that he has truly been justified, or sanctified, simply *because God said it was so*, and there is no role for emotion here. Wesley is saying that God gives us his word that he will accomplish in us those things which he promised to gift us if we will only ask him; this is Wesley's intended meaning when he teaches that one is saved by faith alone, irrespective of one's emotions, or how one *feels* about it, or any particular sign.

Assurance that one has received either pardon or sanctification, as promised by God, is revealed through one's feelings and emotion, and herein lies the difference between having *confidence* that God *will honor* his word to one, and receiving *assurance* that he, God, has *already* honored his word to justify or sanctify that person. In other words, "Faith is the *cause* of one's justification or sanctification;

assurance is the *result* of one's justification or sanctification – and not vice versa.”⁵⁶²

The previous section, above, entitled *Emotional Effects of Aldersgate*, contains many examples of assurance that is usually emotionally sensed, or felt, in one's *heart*. Of course, the word *heart*, here, functions as a metaphor for the soul, the psyche, or the seat of one's personality, and is also, according to Wesley, the location of one's conscience. Science is unable to meaningfully investigate the concept of the conscience, or of the soul, for the simple reason that conscience and soul are metaphysical concepts endowed by God, as Wesley would say, as is the human *heart*. Therefore, it falls to the theologian to fully, and accurately describe these invaluable, spiritual, faculties.

Gratitude to God

Charles claims that Psalm 107 *so nobly describes* what God had done for him through his Aldersgate experience, and his fourth sermon is patterned after this Psalm. Both of these writings contain many positive metaphoric phrases of deliverance, such as “God ‘satisfies the empty soul,’ ‘fills the hungry soul with goodness,’ ‘[breaks] the [prison] gates of brass and bars of iron,’ ‘delivered them out of their distress,’ ‘healed them,’ ‘saved them from destruction,’ ‘blesses them,’ ‘[causes them to] multiply exceedingly [in progeny and cattle],’ and ‘help[s] the poor out of misery.’”⁵⁶³ These metaphors, when combined, create a mental scene of what actually transpired, in Charles's viewpoint, on the day of his Aldersgate experience, the culmination of which was his receiving *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding*.

Charles's own account of his long-sought-for deliverance, which he claims is taken from Psalm 107, contributes a solid foundation for understanding why *gratitude* to God is a proper response to his graciousness and loving-kindness toward us, and this idea particularly stands out in the last two verses of the BCP version.

Psalm 107, from the 1662 BCP⁵⁶⁴

42 The righteous will consider this [these blessings] and rejoice: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.

⁵⁶² See this thesis, 182: Boetcher, written during a time of reflection.

⁵⁶³ See this thesis, 102-103. Phrases taken from the 1662 BCP, and Charles's Sermon 4 in Newport, “Sermons of Charles Wesley.”

⁵⁶⁴ See this thesis, 99-100, 1662 BCP. Brackets are mine.

43 Whoso is wise will ponder these things: and they shall [then] understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

The Wesley brothers are saying that the proper response to God's loving-kindness, and, indeed, for all gifts from God, is *gratitude*, and the very nature of the word *gratitude* implies that it would be wrong to take for granted the blessings of God; John and Charles would say that it would be wrong to think that, *since I am his child, therefore God owes me*, or to regard God's blessings with indifference. The feeling of *gratitude* is a natural reaction of those having the renewed image of Christ as they receive blessings from God; therefore, this feeling of gratitude generates the emotion of gratitude that is outwardly expressed, by motivating one to love our great Savior God by loving others.

John Wesley's Aldersgate experience

The various roles of emotion in John's Aldersgate experience are exactly the same as can be seen in Charles's experience: it is by means of one's emotions that assurance, encouragement, and a peaceful conscience for the recipient of the Holy Spirit are *felt*.

Fire in the Pulpit

John Wesley does not have the reputation of being an emotional minister, however, his writings indicate that he does write with passion; and, his writings indicate that he intends to produce an emotive response in the listener; it is his intention to *prick their consciences*... It is the passion and emotion contained within his writings that give credence to his written sermons so as to create a connection with those living even three centuries later, and it was this emotional bond that first drew this writer to the Wesleyan fold.

As John shares his Journal account of his Aldersgate experience with the world, it is the emotion that is expressed within its pages that elicits a kindred emotional response in the reader, even today, and hopefully for many centuries to come. The reader will recall that while emotion is different than reason, yet reason and emotion are intimately connected, and together, they form a continuum; it is a fallacy to think that the gospel could ever be effectively preached, or taught, in an emotion-free manner.

On the frontispiece of this thesis is a quote, spoken by G. Campbell Morgan over a century ago, that illustrates one of the biggest needs of the Church today:

“Indifference in the world is largely the result of passionlessness in the pulpit.”

Those who listened to the Wesley brothers preach were certainly not *indifferent*! The poetry and hymns of Charles Wesley project the passion of a poet. Likewise, John Wesley equaled his brother, primarily through the medium of prose; these two brothers do not compete with, but rather complement, one another.

When one speaks of passion in the pulpit, one is speaking of a minister who is *animated* by the Holy Spirit. The Wesley brothers not only are knowledgeable, they also have experience in the subject of their preaching; the passion in their sermons is the joy of the Holy Spirit, and this joy overflows into their sermons; this joy not only enlivens them, it also energizes their listeners. *Fire in the pulpit* is a metaphor that represents the unction of the Holy Spirit in the preacher, who is, in turn, in the pulpit. It is imperative that the story of the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences, which some writers see as a disaster for the church, must be passed on to the next generation. Far from being a disaster, the brothers' Aldersgate experiences capture the very heart of their preaching, and also reveal the source of their powerfully emotive messages.

"It is Christ in them," through their Aldersgate experiences (which experiences the Wesleys also called the baptism in the Holy Spirit), "who is responsible for their astounding success." "It is also Christ in the listener," by means of prevenient grace, who empowers the listener to respond to the message of sola fide.⁵⁶⁵

God has created humankind with a rational/emotional faculty, and empirically it is evident that both reason and emotion should be present in the pulpit. Reason presents a logical message from the pulpit, and it is the emotion in that message which makes that sermon real to the listeners. From the listener's vantage point, passion in the message not only makes the experience of listening to anointed preaching real, it makes that message memorable, perhaps even memorable enough to reach the next generation.

Emotion and Conscience

God speaks to Christians through their consciences as he gives them feelings of assurance, encouragement, and the peace of God, feelings that are experienced and then expressed as emotions by those who have received the Holy Spirit; a process that will continue at least as long as they faithfully live on this earth. But, in order to bring about this result, the preacher must first *prick the consciences* of his listeners

⁵⁶⁵ See this thesis, 144: Boetcher, written during reflection.

to help them begin their walk on the *ordo salutis*, and Outler realizes this fact when he places the conscience first in the *ordo salutis*. Since one's conscience primarily speaks to one through emotion, Outler, and the Wesley brothers, are saying that the emotive preacher must first transfer to the congregants their true *state of being* as possessors of carnal minds, such as was seen in Charles's vivid descriptions of lost humanity, on both a cognitive and an emotional/feeling level.

This fact contradicts the statement that the conscience was not very important to either Wesley brother. However, this erroneous statement does correlate closely with the attitude or at least the praxis of most Christians and preachers today, for this writer can count on one hand the number of sermons he has heard concerning the conscience over the past sixty years; and he has been as guilty as those of whom he writes.

Outler, an outstanding Wesleyan scholar, understands the *ordo salutis*, the way of salvation, which begins with the conscience, as an *organic continuum* because there are no distinct divisions separating the various steps, and his use of the word *organic* is remarkable. The word *organic* has two meanings that are applicable to the *ordo Salutis*. To be organic means to be alive and Christ is, himself, the living way of salvation. The second meaning of the word *organic* includes the idea of forming an integral part of a whole; that is, each part or step of the *ordo Salutis* contributes its share towards the composition of the one living way to salvation. The importance of the conscience, which is the entryway of Outler's *ordo salutis*, becomes evident when one considers that entering the *ordo salutis* via any other step will subvert the entire process of salvation, because, as John Wesley teaches, we must be cognizant of our spiritual disease (called sin), before we can find the cure for it, for God makes one aware of one's spiritual condition via one's conscience.

It is only fire in the pulpit - the emotive and anointed preaching of a pastor - that is able to touch and resonate with the emotional needs of parishioners... via their respective consciences. Only now will the listener be motivated to act; only now will the sinner want the proffered cure; only now can one be encouraged to remain with, and grow in, Christ, who is one's only hope from the destruction to come.

This writer has added one final step to Outler's *ordo Salutis*, the conscience, because it is only through the conscience that God continuously speaks to his people, it is through the conscience that the people receive joy unspeakable, peace

and the love of God; and, it is through the conscience that people receive the loving, corrective, and necessary guidance which they so desperately must have.

Emotion in Poetry and Music

John Wesley, who wrote one hundred fifty sermons, nevertheless, believed that the best way to teach his adherents theology was through the singing of hymns, because the emotion that naturally arises through hymn-singing strengthens the memory, and the Wesley hymnals were considered to be repositories for theology. Additionally, many who sang these hymns were illiterate, but they excelled in remembering the hymns, and therefore, the theology contained in them.

Music presents a multi-faceted *emotional experience* in that it fosters relational bonding to one's family, one's church, one's community, and with God. Music also becomes a way to assess which relationships are important.

"The process of creating and listening to music is a form of emotional experience,"⁵⁶⁶ and the congregant and the congregation who are either singing or listening also create music in their minds, which, in turn, creates an emotional experience, which cause feelings and emotions that enable them to bond to God and one another. Furthermore, if theological teachings are involved, then these teachings can become shared community values.

Emotion and Memory

One important characteristic of explicit memory is its ability to forget, lest one's memory becomes overwhelmed with superfluous facts, images or data. However, explicit memory is also employed when reading, perhaps, a sermon, and is also utilized should one desire to recall a particular theological point, and herein a problem can arise. A special attribute of music, of singing, or reading poetry, or listening to music, is its ability to evoke an emotional experience; the greater the emotional intensity of that experience, the more one's memory will be enhanced. Thus, one role of emotion when one is reading Charles's poetry, or singing a hymn, or even just listening to a theologically-laden hymn, is to enhance one's memory.

The Methodist congregations of Wesley's day were not afraid to sing out with gusto, and often were very emotional; for this reason they were often accused of fanaticism. What could have caused such passionate outburst of song? When they

⁵⁶⁶ See this thesis, 187: Daniel J. Siegel, 2012, *The Developing Mind; How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*; 2nd Ed., 178.

chose songs such as *O For a Thousand Tongues*, they were recalling what God had done for them as they praised God, or they were looking to God for salvation, and many of them had already received an Aldersgate experience; these reasons are more than sufficient to induce enthusiastic (twenty-first century meaning) singing.

The powerful emotions which they experienced as they sang helped them to not only remember the words, but also the theology, that was enshrined within their songs. John and Charles made a wise decision when they crafted Wesleyan theology into verse that was intended to be sung, because this choice assured that the principles of Methodism will never fade from memory.

The prose, hymns, and poems of the Wesley brothers have generated significant emotion in the Church in general, emotion that needed to be expressed, and is expressed, through an additional role that emotion plays in Wesley's soteriology, namely, that of raising up those who would become evangelists to the unsaved, and who would, in due time, be motivated to travel to all parts of John's parish.⁵⁶⁷ Through music and hymns, and even John's sermons, emotional bonding is ever growing by the means of song and praise, and is felt today throughout the church and, thankfully, now in every corner of John's parish.

The Wesley Bouts of Depression

Depression, today deemed the mood disease, can have several possible causes, but this thesis is limited to the investigation of the likelihood that the brothers suffered from religious depression, because it is no longer possible to investigate chemical or biological causes of their depression. This limitation does not mean that chemical or biological causes are ruled out; rather, the only question to be addressed is, do the writings of the Wesley brothers indicate that religious depression is a credible cause of their depression?

The evidence, gained through research throughout the Wesleyan corpus, Wesleyan theological commentary, and current research provided by a leading psychiatrist and neuroscientific researcher on depression seems to validate that the periodic episodes of depression may be mostly due to religious reasons.

Each bout of depression for either brother was immediately preceded by a perception of failure. For instance, when John returned from Georgia he not only genuinely failed in his commitment to General Oglethorpe, but he also felt he had

⁵⁶⁷ John Wesley claimed the whole world as his parish.

failed in his evangelistic outreach to the Indians and in his own relationship with God. Indeed, he came to the conclusion that he was not, nor ever had been, a Christian at all, and, considering how hard he had tried to be a Christian, this realization brought on depression. This pattern of seeing himself a failure, followed by his declaration that he was not a Christian, is repeated several times throughout much of his life.

The evidence shows that the brothers' consciences played a key part in their episodes of depression. How did they know they had (supposedly) failed God? Their consciences had told them so. Before, during, and especially after, their individual Aldersgate experiences, both men had prayed that God would hone their consciences to become razor sharp, that is, that their consciences would detect even the slightest sin in their lives. Charles, during the times of his depression, wrote that "God continues to work *by* me, but not *in* me,"⁵⁶⁸ indicating that he thought he was displeasing to God. Their logic was simple: as Christians, they should not be sinning, but their consciences told them otherwise; ergo, they are not Christians.

In 1746, John wrote: "... on the contrary, a Christian has the most exquisite sensibility, such as he would not have conceived before. He never had such a tenderness of conscience as he has had since the love of God has reigned in his heart."⁵⁶⁹

Near the end of his life, John discussed the problem of a *spiced* conscience: "But sometimes this excellent quality, *tenderness* of conscience, is carried to an extreme. We find some who fear where no fear is, who are continually condemning themselves without cause; imagining some things to be sinful which the Scripture nowhere condemns; and supposing other things to be their duty which the Scripture nowhere enjoins. This is properly termed a 'scrupulous' conscience, and is a sore evil. It is highly expedient to yield to it as little as possible; rather it is a matter of earnest prayer that you may be delivered from this sore evil, and may recover a sound mind: to which nothing would contribute more than the converse of a pious and judicious friend."⁵⁷⁰

While John does not provide any information concerning the manner in which he learned this truth, the answer becomes apparent. Therefore, as Wesley provides a tie

⁵⁶⁸ See this thesis, 126: Frank Baker, *Charles Wesley as Revealed by His Letters*, 1948, 33-34.

⁵⁶⁹ See this thesis, 170: JW, *Sermon 12: The Witness of Our Own Spirit*, BCE 1:300, 312

⁵⁷⁰ See this thesis, 171: JW, *Sermon 105. On Conscience*, BCE 3:487

between his conscience and his depression, his depression becomes a theological matter and therefore part of his soteriology.

Chapter 5

Originality, Contributions, and Further Study

The focus of this thesis is on the role that emotion plays in the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley. In the process of researching this theme, a number of original contributions to Wesleyan Studies have hopefully been developed, and perhaps the most significant is the re-discovery of the *key* to understanding Charles Wesley's Aldersgate experience.

So Nobly Describing What God Had Done

In his Journal, Charles writes, on the morning after his Aldersgate experience, the following lines: "Monday, May 22 [, 1738]. Under his protection I waked next morning and rejoiced in reading the 107 Psalm, *so nobly describing what God had done for my sou*" [in bringing me, yesterday, through my own Pentecostal (i.e., Aldersgate) experience)."⁵⁷¹ This writer's re-discovery that Charles claims that Psalm 107 *so nobly describ[es]* his Aldersgate experience of May 21, 1738, is an original finding because he has not found any other competent theological writer mentioning this fact, even though several well-known theologians quoted sentences from Charles's Journal that are adjacent to Charles's claim. This writer also makes the original claim that Charles's re-writing of Psalm 107 is actually his Christian autobiography, and becomes the pattern that he will use for the rest of his life in his sermons and poetry, which makes this a significant discovery, indeed.

In analyzing the BCP Psalm 107, a clear pattern emerges: the people sin, and God withdraws; the people repent, and God draws near; this back-and-forth pattern is repeated several times, and it becomes evident that God is using this method in order to teach them... to be faithful to God. Charles then personalizes these verses of Old Testament Hebrew poetry by re-writing this Psalm, and the resulting repeating pattern is the same, one of feeling pain and distress, as did the ancient Hebrews, then turns to God in repentance, followed by entering into God's

⁵⁷¹ See his thesis, 179; CW, in S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Kenneth G. C. Newport: *The Manuscript Journal of the Reverend Charles Wesley*, 1:108. Italics and brackets mine.

blessings. This same pattern can be seen in many of Charles's sermons, sermons in which he makes many oblique references to his own Aldersgate experience.

The same thing can be said of John, for both men had the same problem of trusting in Christ and also trusting in their own good works. They both had to learn the hard way to discard their own righteousness, through many years of struggle, pain, and failure, but in the end they finally succeeded, with John following Charles's experience by three days. The message of Psalm 107 is clear: one must cast away everything that seems to offer hope of salvation and rely solely upon God as the only source of salvation, in other words by just taking God at his word.

The importance of Charles's *key* lies in the fact that this principle is still as valid today as it was for Charles, and the need for this principle today is urgent, as is the need for an Aldersgate experience that can break the chains of sin and lead to the integration of one's personality.

The Meaning of *Simple*

The critical analysis of *Aldersgate Reconsidered* in chapter one is an original composition written specifically for this paper, and is important because one of the major conclusions reached by three of the authors of that book negates this thesis. Also, due to the deservedly high status of some of these authors as Wesleyan scholars, their conclusion could not remain unchallenged. They apparently were unaware of the eighteenth-century meaning of the word *simple*, a word used by John Wesley in his description of the Christian life, and of which these writers took great exception. Wesley is cited by the OED as an authority in the use of this word concerning its meaning of unmixed, which is derived from the Latin word *simplex*; the opposite of *simplex* is the word *duplex*, from which the word *duplicity* is derived. John taught that genuine Christian *simple* faith was unmixed, that is, not mixed with, unbelief or anything else; these writers thought that John Wesley meant that the Christian life was uncomplicated, or easy, which is certainly not the case.

The Etymology of *Emotion*

A short critical review concerning the etymology of the word *emotion* is presented and several writers who have written about the development of this word are cited. The organization and presentation of this material is original, as are the conclusions that have been drawn, and used, in this thesis. This review aids in relating eighteenth-century affection to twenty-first-century emotion.

Theological Lexicography

One problem that is common among the laity as well as the clerical side is the use of theological lexicography to define common words, and in particular the meaning of the verb and noun: *love*. The worst example of this practice involves the Greek verbs and nouns ἀγάπη, ἀγαπάω, and φιλέω, and these Greek words are all translated as *love*. With respect to Wesleyan soteriology, the role of the emotion called *love* can only be correctly understood if one also comprehends the context and background behind these words.

This writer's original and critical review of the theological lexicography that is used by Thomas Oord in his 2010 book, *The Nature of Love: a Theology*, addresses this problem. The *definition* of love must be lexically, rather than biblically, determined. *How* the word love is used, whether in the Bible or in a secular application, is only determined by the grammar and context in which the word *love* is embedded, and without this grammatical and contextual background, this word, or any other word for that matter, is meaningless.

Wesley published three editions of his dictionary, but he only included words that ordinary people might use; in his preface to this work John endorses Samuel Johnson's dictionary for defining all words that are not found in his (Wesley's) dictionary. Love, a polysemous word, has twenty six different meanings in Johnson, and it is only the context of the text under scrutiny that guides one in selecting the correct meaning.

Oord also conflates the words sympathy and empathy, and this writer's organization in refuting his claim and providing definitions for these words, is original.

ἀγάπη and ἀγαπάω

An original composition, written for use in this thesis, discusses the meaning and nuances contain in these two Greek words, with much aid from his pastor and mentor, the Rev. Percy Gutteridge (1909-1998) that was gained in private discussion many years ago. The noun ἀγάπη, and the verb ἀγαπάω refer to the nature of love; φιλέω makes reference to the expression of love. While the definition of these Greek words do not change, the grammar and context explicitly define the type of love under consideration. The word love is *nuanced* by selecting either ἀγαπάω or

φιλέω, and this nuance indicates the relationship of love with respect to context of the text under consideration.

A Range of Opinions

Through the aid of neuroscience this writer has been able to suggest an explanation as to why there are so many different opinions concerning the Wesley brothers' Aldersgate experiences, opinions that range from the position of being pejorative to that of being hagiographic.

First, in reading any one single word, neuroscientist and reading specialist Maryanne Wolf says that when reading, the Western reader's non-conscious mind in an instant, as they read each word on the page, recalls every definition of that particular word that is stored in the reader's subconscious memory, and then non-consciously chooses the best definition. If, however, the intended meaning of the word is not in the reader's memory, then that definition cannot be chosen. Some of the co-authors of *Aldersgate Reconsidered* may have erred in understanding Wesley's usage of the word *simple* only because Wesley's definition of *simple* was not likely in their non-conscious list of definitional choices.

Second, the reader's engagement with the text, and the reader's background knowledge, non-consciously generate hypotheses and inferences with respect to the text under consideration, and these factors will lead to an understanding of that text. One's *biases* are an integral part of every person's background knowledge, and these biases are approximately proportional to the emotional charge that is contained within the text. Therefore, it is normal and to be expected that a reader's bias, either negative or positive bias concerning a text, would do harm to one's understanding of that particular text *unless* one is, first, aware of one's bias, and second, that one takes one's bias into consideration when one interprets the text.

Pricking the Conscience

One's conscience plays a major role in the growth of every Christian, and Outler's *Ordo Salutis* begins with the conscience as the first step in the way of salvation, for, says Wesley, the conscience is intended by God to function as one's moral guide throughout one's lifetime. However, the conscience, as is true of all the other faculties comprising the human psyche, enters this world already in a broken condition. Thus, one's conscience, along with every other faculty of the psyche, is in need of salvation, and that repair is at least begun, if not accomplished, during one's Aldersgate experience.

However, thanks to Wesley's concept of God's prevenient grace, even a broken conscience can operate well enough to be pricked, that is, enabled to respond to the words of the evangelist, even, or especially, before one ever has an Aldersgate experience. One's conscience is pricked by the words of the evangelist when one responds to the message of the evangelist as she or he explains why every person needs the cure that only Christ can provide. Wesley teaches that, unless the conscience is first pricked it is a waste of time to preach the gospel to the lost.

This writer has come to realize that Wesley's *ordo salutis* should actually begin *and* end with one's conscience - a most unique and original claim - because it is through the conscience, for the remainder of the born-again, spirit-filled believer's lifetime, that God communicates joy, peace or chastisement, and by which God provides a sure compass that has been given to the Christian, pointing the way home.

The Wesley Bouts of Depression

Discovering what most likely triggered the Wesley brothers' bouts of depression is an original finding of this thesis, and is more than just of passing interest concerning the Wesley brothers, for near the very end of John Wesley's life, he obliquely ties his bouts of depression to his theology when he writes, in 1788, the following line: "But sometimes this excellent quality, *tenderness* of conscience, is carried to an extreme."⁵⁷² Researching through the Wesleyan corpus, the Wesley brothers may have occasionally suffered from religious depression, that is, depression caused by spiritual problems and concerns, but this finding does not eliminate other possible causes.

The Thesis Goal

This thesis began with the goal of defending the pivotal role of emotion as the means whereby one might reach a better understanding of the soteriology of John and Charles Wesley. This chapter delineates, in summary form, several of the crucial roles of emotion within this context, whereby the reader may adjudge whether these new insights do, indeed, facilitate an understanding of the Wesleys' soteriology.

In striving for a successful defense, significant research has been accomplished, with a special focus on material sources because this writer realizes that his material

⁵⁷² See this thesis, 171: JW, Sermon 105. *On Conscience*, BCE 3:487

is only as reliable as his source. Therefore, significant critical material has been utilized; indeed, many of these new, critical texts were not available to previous researchers.

Additionally, this author found that the writings of several later generations of Methodists, including some non-Methodists, who wrote between, perhaps, 1875 and 1940, thinkers who nevertheless remained true to the Wesley brothers' values and doctrines, have made several significant contributions to this thesis. This statement is not intended to minimize the importance of writers before or after this period; it is intended to highlight the importance of their otherwise obscure writings with respect to John and Charles Wesley's ideals and values. These often overlooked works, written by now generally unknown authors, remain rich sources for clarity and understanding of Wesley's theology, and provide examples of those who choose to live, in Wesley's words, a real Christian life.

Further Research

This thesis has by no means exhausted investigation of the roles of emotion in either Wesley's soteriology or his theology in general. For instance, the role of emotion with regard to belief presents many opportunities for research. With the help of the sciences already mentioned, this writer believes that a study of belief and emotion in Wesley's theology will yield several discoveries of practical benefit to theology and theologians, as well as to the laity. Research into the role of emotion in Wesley's theology with regard to the faculties of imagination and intuition will certainly be a fruitful endeavor. More work can certainly be done concerning emotion and conscience.

One of the primary motives for writing this thesis has been to organize and develop a stable base upon which further research on the roles of emotion with respect to Wesleyan theology can be built. This writer would be most satisfied if his work should make even a small contribution to Wesleyan studies.

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